A CRITICAL STUDY OF VĀCASPATI MISHRA'S DISTINCTIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO ADVAITA

By

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A Thesis submitted to the
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis "A Critical Study of Vācaspati Mishra's Distinctive Contributions to Advaita" by Shri V.N.Sheshagiri Rao, submitted to University of Mysore for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, is prepared under my guidance and supervision and it has not been the basis in part or full for the award of any diploma or degree in this or any other University.

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Place: Mysore,

Dated: 18.2.81

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the entire work embodied in this thesis has been carried out by me. The extent of information derived from the existing literature has been indicated and fully acknowledged in the thesis at the appropriate places. The work is original and has not been submitted in part or in full for any diploma or degree in this or any other University.

(V.M. SHESHAGIRI RAO.)

Place: Mysore,

Dated: 18-2-1981

PREFACE

In this thesis, an attempt is made, to present in a systematic and critical way, the distinctive contributions of Vācaspati Mishra to Advaita Vedānta. It expounds the doctrine of Advaita strictly according to Bhāmatī. It is contended here that Vācaspati's contributions to Advaita lay in elucidating and perfecting the already available thought system of both Shankara and Maṇḍana. Through a searching, enquiry into the deeper questions of Advaita, Vācaspati gave rise to his distinctive contributions. The credit of connecting Shankara Prasthana with Maṇḍana Prasthana mainly goes to him. The present thesis brings out the differences of opinion, in matters of detail, between Vācaspati and Shankara on the one hand and Maṇḍana on the other, besides giving an estimate of the points of agreement between the three great thinkers. It seeks to show that Vācaspati does equal justice to both Shankara and Maṇḍana.

The thesis is in Nine Chapters. Chapter I — which is introductory deals with the life, works and date of Vācaspati. The illustrious works of the scholar of all facets and phases of Indian Philosophy, are briefly outlined besides giving a short account of the nature and

importance of Bhāmatī in Advaita tradition. It is of the view that there is no obsence of accurate chromology in the case of Vācaspati Mishra and refutes, in the light of the clue furnished by his own works, the views of some scholars regarding his date.

Chapter II, is on, 'the nature of Knowledge' in Advaita. It shows how the distinction between Svarūpa Jñāna and Vṛtti Jñāna is basic and central to Advaita Vedānta. The fine piece of dialectic with which Vācaspati establishes the self-luminosity of knowledge is discussed. It elaborates the Advaitic conception of the test of truth and contends that all other theories of truth can be ultimately reduced to the theory of non-contradictoriness. It also critically examines Vācaspati's treatment and refutation of other theories of error.

'Perception and the concept of Bheda' is the subjectmatter of the III Chapter. It seeks to show how the criticisms against Advaitic view of Śabda (Śruti)are misconceived. The problem of the relation between Śruti and pratyaksha, śruti and tarka (reason) are examined. It is of the view that perception, strictly speaking does not establish difference as it gets contradicted by the

rise of a higher knowledge. Nor can difference be defended by arguments in terms of substance or quality. It concludes with the consideration and refutation of the doctrine of Bhedābheda.

Chapter IV, is on 'The Doctrine of Nirguṇa Brahman' which is the most distinguishing feature of Advaita. It deals with Vācaspati's elucidation of the same. It shows how the emphasis laid on the concept of 'Infinity' compels one to accept the only reality, viz., Brahman. The Thesis seeks to maintain the uncompromising ontological non-dualism.

Chapter V, is on 'The Nature of Jīva'. Vācaspati's supplementation of the view that 'Jīvatva' of the Jīva is due to adhyāsa and that adhyāsa is the root cause of all evil is elaborated here. The three theories of jīva viz., Bimba-Pratibimba-Vāda, Avaccheda-vāda and Ābhāsavāda are critically discussed. The thesis seeks to show that Avaccheda vāda, by and large, is Vācaspati's pet theory, regarding the nature of jīva. It refutes the fluid view that Vācaspati indiscriminately makes use of both pratibimba vāda and Avaccheda vāda.

Similarly the problem whether jīva is one or many and the philosophical implications of both are worked out. It brings into limelight the Advaitic contention that jīva-bhāva though anadi is not eternal. It ceases to be jīva the moment it realises its own true nature. It ends with an estimate of Shankara's position regarding the same.

'The nature of the physical Universe' is the topic of the VI Chapter. The status of the world and the doctrine of Causation are critically outlined. Avidya, the corner stone of Advaitic metaphysics and epistemology is analysed and discussed. 'Aneka-Avidya-vāda', Vācaspati's distinctive theory is contrasted with 'Eka-Avidya-vāda' of the Vivaraṇa school. Similarly the problem of the locus of avidyā is discussed. The philosophical implications of the different views on the problem of locus of avidyā are worked out. It is contended here that though a tentative statement can be made that 'Anekajīvāshrita-Aneka-Avidyā-vāda' ends up in Dṛṣṭi-Sṛṣṭi vāda, it is not really so, as far as Vācaspati is concerned, in view, of his recognition of the need for Iśvara in the system. This is further confirmed in the light of his blistering attack on the Buddhist Vijñānavāda. The thesis draws attention to the point that Vācaspati successfully established the indeterminable nature

of the universe. In the end a brief comparative estimate of both Drsti-Srsti and Srsti-Drsti vādas is given.

Chapter VII, is on, 'the nature of Moksha and the means therefor'. Vācaspati's view, that moksha is a final psychosis of the internal organ, in the form of continued meditation on the true nature of Reality, which is of the nature of bliss, is elaborated. Attention is drawn to the fact that Vācaspati's 'Anekajīvāshrita-aneka-avidyā-vāda' despite its shortcomings, successfully establishes the distinction between the released and the bound. His distinctive view of the place of karma in the Advaitic scheme of Sādhana is outlined and is shown to be less satisfactory. Similarly his distinctive interpretation of 'Sādhana catuṣṭaya' is discussed. It is shown towards the end of the Chapter that the concept of Jīvanmukti is totally and wholeheartedly accepted by Vācaspati.

Chapter VIII, is on, 'the distinctive contributions of Vācaspati Mishra to Advaita'. It is maintained here that his distinctive contributions to Advaita lay only in contrast with what came to be later known as the Vivaraṇa School. As far as the ontological non-dualism is concerned he has nothing to differ from Shankara, on the one hand and Maṇḍana,

on the other. It is only in the nature of details, methods of reasoning and techniques that he develops positions, we may recognise as different from the Vivarana and these may be regarded as his contributions. It is also shown that true Advaita transcends view points and that strictly speaking there can be no Advaiting at all.

The IX and the final Chapter sums up the points made in the previous chapters and attempts a critical estimate of all the distinctive features of Vācaspati's system.

I am deeply indebted to my revered teacher and supervisor Dr. K.B. Ramakrishna Rao, Professor and Head of the Post-graduate Department of Philosophy, for his insightful guidance subtle perspective and valuable suggestions. Without his inspiration and support this work would not have been completed. What I owe to him is more than what I can express in words. I also offer my gratitude to another revered teacher of mine, Professor S.S. Raghava Char, Retired Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy for his constant help, encouragement and suggestions. It is my sacred duty to

remember here, Vedānta-Brahma Vidyāratna Sri. Pātanakara Chandrashekhara Bhatta, under whose feet I read Bhāmatī and took notes. My obeisance to my revered father, for his kind interest in my work. I am grateful to the authorities of the University Library for providing me the necessary facilities. My thanks go to Sri L. Nagaraj for his neat and quick typing.

(V.N. SHESHAGIRI RAO)

List of Abbreviations

Bhā...	..	Bhāmatī
Bhā.Ca.Sū...	..	Bhāmatī Catusūtri
Br.Si...	..	Brahma Siddhi
HIP...	..	History of Indian Philosophy
Nai.Si..	..	Naishkarmya Siddhi
P.P.	..	Pañcapādikā
PPV.	..	Pañca pādika Vivaraṇa
S.L.S.	..	Siddhānta-lesha-Samgraha
Sv.Upd.	..	Shvetāshvatara Upanishad
V.S.M.	..	Vedānta-Siddhānta Muktāvali

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CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

Vacaspati Mishra, his life, works and date.

1

Vācaspati Mishra was a versatile genius with encyclopaedic learning. He had a wonderful expositional skill and presentation of whatever subject or system he chose to handle. He had a life long passion for philosophic truth. A multisided philosophic genius as he was, Vācaspati devoted himself to the task of settingforth authoritative expositions of all the darshanas. He wrote on all the important systems as instances of his philosophic objectivity.

The following are the works of Vācaspati:
(1) Nyāya Kaṇikā[1] - one of his works on Nyāya, is a commentary on the Vidhiviveka of Maṇḍana; (2) Tattva Samîksha - a commentary on Maṇḍana's Brahmasiddhi[2]; (3) Tattva Bindu - an independent treatise on Vākyārtha; (4) Nyāya Vārtika Tātparya Tīka - his another great work - is a commentary on Udyotkara's 'Nyāya Vārtika'. It is an epistemological work which discusses in detail the nature of the pramanās. It reconstructs Nyāya-Vaiśeshika philosophy. On account of this work, he also became famous as Tātparyachārya; (5) Nyāya sūchi - the Nyāya work, perhaps written as a supplement to Tātparya; (6) Sāmkhya - Tattva - Kaumudi - a commentary on Iśvarakrishna's Sāmkhya kārika; (7) Tattva Vaishāradi a commentary on Vyāsa's Yogabhāshya; (8) Bhāmatī -

a commentary on Brahma-Sutra-Shānkara-Bhāshya. All these works find their reference in the concluding third verse of Bhāmatī[3].

Besides these works, Vācaspati is supposed to have written other works like: (1) Nyāya Tattva Loka, (2) Nyāya ratna Tika, (3) Brahmattva Samhitoddīpini, (4) Yuktadeepika - a work on Sankhya, (5) Vedānta Tattva Kaumudi[4].

His works on Nyāya are almost entirely devoted to the exposition and refutation of Buddhist theories. In these works Vācaspati has laid down a firm foundation for Nyāya realism. His influence on the later Nyāya works was tremendous. In the candid words of Prof. Stcherbatsky: "In the IX century, the school of Naiyāyikās produced in the person of, Vācaspati Mishra, a man who is perhaps the most distinguished among the scholarly philosophers of Brahmanical India. His knowledge is overwhelming, his information always first hand, his exposition even of the most difficult and abtruse theories, very lucid, his impartiality exemplary. He is not a creator of new philosophic theories. But he is an historian of philosophy imbibed with a true scientific spirit"[5].

Of the works attributed to Vācaspati, 'Bhāmatī' and Tattva Samīksha' are regarded by scholars, as his

Vedāntic works. But Aufrecht says that 'Tattva Bindu', Vācaspati's another work, is also Vedāntic. Prof. Das Gupta does not seem to accept this. Because in Tattva Bindu, he asserts, the entire discussion is on 'Sphota Vāda', the doctrine of sound which has nothing to do with Vedānta[6].

It appears, Vācaspati's search for truth culminated only in the metaphysics of Advaita philosophy. In a way his scholarly works on different systems prepared him to devote his time, almost entirely to a study and exposition of Advaita Vedānta. The Bhāmatī represents the culminating phase of his long sustained and integrated career as a philosophic writer.

The Bhamati, like the Brahma-sutra-Shānkara-Bhāshya, is known for its profoundity of spirit and subtlety of thought. It represents one of the main streams of Shankara's interpretation. It is known for its vigour of style and clarity of presentation. It gives a clear and careful account of the central ideas of Advaita. It expounds uncompromising non-dualism setting forth its basic principles in cogent terms. In short, his view of Advaita is marked by depth of insight.

It is not difficult to see what could have been the force that impelled Vācaspati to write a commentary on

the Brahmasūtra-Shānkara-bhāshya. The scholars of the Bhāmati school of Vedānta attach much importance to Bhāmatī. The obvious reasons are: Vācaspati's other Vedāntic work, viz. Tattva Samīksha - a commentary on Mandana's Brahma-siddhi - has not found the light of the day. We have to see the remains of Vācaspati's Advaitism in Bhāmati alone. Bhāmatī, thus, is the only extent work on Vedānta; it is the only source as far as the vedāntic views of Vācaspati are concerned. No doubt it is a commentary; but this does not prevent it from being called a critical work, inasmuch as it is not limited in scope, in the sense that a commentator's duty is only to expand and clarify the meanings of the concepts of the original thinker. Apart from being commentary, Bhāmatī, has all the features of an independent work, as he inclines to reject, in it, loose metaphysical explanations of other systems. Interpreting Shankara, indeed is a subtle art and is wrought with certain serious shortcomings. Yet in interpreting others in general, it is many a time seen, that one's own views or impressions find a place in what is being interpreted. In fact, in his attempt to give us an effective exposition of Advaitic truth Vācaspati does not stand silently but resorts to criticism and evaluation and in doing so he hardly avoids personal expressions of opinion. Thus Vācaspati, eventhough a commentator on the Brahma-Sūtra-Shankara-Bhāshya,

overcomes the limitations as a commentator and goes to pronounce his own critical standpoint, with regard to the subtle and intricate concepts of Advaita system. He proposes to enquire into what has been explicitly said, what has been left unsaid and what has been inadequately said in the original bhashya of Shankara. This is the view of Amalānanda, the commentator on Bhāmatī.[7] He explicitly says that Bhāmatī is not a mere commentary, but a vārtika[8].

However, it should be said that Vācaspati does not take too much liberty with the original bhāshya. He pays eloquent tribute to the latter. He calls it 'Prasanna gambheeram' and holds it in high esteem. It is clear, admits Vācaspati and deep. That is, it is calm to outward appearance but the depth of thought revealed on analysis shows its might and majesty. He expresses his extremely sincere discipleship (vinaya) to his 'master' Shankara. He says: "As street waters are purified by falling into the currents of the Ganges, even so the lowly works of those like us, by their conjunction with the work of the master".[9]

Further Bhāmatī is considered very great by virtue of its having a number of subcommentaries. 'Vedānta Kalpataru' by Amalānanda (13th Century A.D.) is the most important and the earliest of the commentaries. It became more popular

obviously because of the author's celebrity. 'Vedānta-kalpataru' is further commented upon by Appayya Dīkshita (16th Century A.D.) under the name 'Vedānta Kalpataru Parimala'.

Vedānta Kalpataru of Amalānanda is also further commented upon by Lakshmi Nrsimha, son of Konda Bhatta, towards the end of 17th century under the name 'Ābhoga'. It has attracted little attention. It criticisms 'Parimala' often though inspired by the latter. It follows relatively an independent line of thinking. Besides Ābhoga, Lakshmi Nrsimha, seems to have written another work called 'Tarka-Pradeepa'[10].

Amalānanda's 'Vedanta-Kalpataru' is further commented upon by Vaidyanātha Payagunda, under the name 'Vedānta Kalpataru Manjari'[11].

Amalānanda has also written another independent work called 'Śāstra darpaṇa' wherein he discusses the different topics (adhikaraṇās) of Brahma-sūtras. Here there is but little scope for the exhibition of his originality. In fact, 'Śāstradarpaṇa' is merely a reflection of Vācaspati's views.[12] He himself admits this in the second verse of the Śāstradarpaṇa.[13]

Still there are other commentaries on Bhāmatī, such as 'Bhāmatī Tilaka' of Allāla Sūri (1700 A.D.), son of Trivikramācharya,[14] 'the Bhāmatī Vilāsa', 'the Bhāmatī Vyākhyā' or the Rju Prakāshika' by Sriranganatha who is also known as Akhandananda, 'Rju Prakashika' is a simple gloss which closely follows 'Kalpataru'. 'Bhāmatī Bhavoddipikā' by Achyuta-Krishna Tirtha, who also wrote a commentary on 'Siddhānta-Lesha' and Taittiveeya Bhāshya; and an anonymous 'Bhāmatī-Yukti-Sangraha'.[15]

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Date of Vācaspati Mishra

Vācaspati Mishra though a person of wide repute, his personal life is not very well known. Yet his date is not so enshrouded in mystery, though there is a total lack of exact chronology in early Indian history. There has been in India, an indifferent attitude towards the personal histories of her greatmen. If some Indians repent for having been lacking in matters of historicity, others contend that 'Tattva' or 'Truth' knows no confinement of age and time and is beyond these borders as it is comprehensive. Hence there is no necessity, so goes the ancient Indian view to fix a certain date of a certain philosopher or thinker, for what he teaches is not for his own country

or time, but for the whole world. Though it is to be admitted that "the task of the historian is hard, expecially in philosophy"[16], yet there is no absence of accurate chronology, in the case of Vācaspati Mishra. The problem of determining the exact date of his is not insoluble. His own works furnish us a clue for the determination of his date. And in fixing the date of Vācaspati we should keep ourselves in touch with the documents given by Vācaspati himself. We would then be logically compiled to come to a decision. This would be a better and a wiser way. In this light, we may even discard the suggestions regarding the date of Vācaspati, given by any scholar other than Vācaspati himself. An attempt may be made to wrest documentary facts evinced by his own works to suit a comfortable date of his.

With the help of internal and external evidences available in his works, his date can be determined. And it depends upon the following factors:

(i) Vācaspati himself makes a statement that he completed the work called 'Nyāya-Sūci-Nibandha', a short work on the arrangement of Nyāya sutras in the year 898.[17]

(ii) The name of King Nrga is mentioned in Bhāmatī.[18] This contention actually found in Bhāmatī helps to determine the chronological relation between

Vācaspati and Nṛga.

(iii) From the chronological reference of (a) Udayana (984 - A.D.) who has commented upon Vācaspati's 'Nyāya Vaartooka Tatparya Teeka' under the name 'Nyāya vārtika Tātparya Teeka Parishuddhi' and (b) Jayanta Bhatta, the author of 'Nyāya Manjari'.

Considering the first factor, the question one has to ask for oneself is, whether the date of construction of the work, 'Nyāya-sūchi-Nibandha' (i.e., 898) belongs to Vikram era or not. Since Vācaspati is believed to be of the native of Mithila of Gangetic Hindusthan,[19] the date must be taken as corresponding to Vikram era[20] only, which when converted becomes 841 A.D.[21]

Thus on the strength of the above quoted reference Vācaspati may safely be assigned to the period in between 800 and 900 A.D.[22] It can be concluded that, Vācaspati flourished in the 9th century A.D. and wrote several works.

Coming to the second factor of evidence which also helps us very much in fixing his date. But there is one difficulty. Prof. Das Gupta[23] and J.H. Woods[24] maintain that there is no epigraphical record of the king Nṛga and hence we cannot, in their view, say, when and

where he lived.

But there are other scholars like Mahomahopaadhyaya Ganganatha Jha,[25] S.Subrahmanya Sastri and V.Subrahmanya Sastri[26] who disagree with Das Gupta and J.H. Woods. They point out that Nṛga, the real king of Mithila, was the predecessor of the King Nanyadeva, who reigned about 962 A.D. or 1019 Vikram era.[28]

The two learned Sastris referred to above write that Nṛga was a real king and not a mythological figure. This may almost be taken as correct, for Amalānanda, in Vedānta Kalpataru[29] says the following: "Aacharya yam maheepatir Mahayanchakar tasya nama Nṛga iti". There is a sufficient evidence on record in Bhāmatī that Vācaspati was under Nṛga who was a king of generous nature, highly famed for his wonderful deeds.[29(a)] He was well established in the court of King Nṛga.[30] He, for a great many years of his life, found aid and comfort under the kind patronage of king Nṛga.

Coming to the third factor of evidence it can be very well discerned that there must have been a good interval of time between Vācaspati and Udayana (984 A.D.) and needless to add, Vācaspati was earlier to Udayana.

Further, with regard to the relation between Vācaspati and Jayanta Bhatta, there have been conflicting and controversial views. Vācaspati mentions 'Nyāyamanjari' by name in Nyāya Kanikā as a work of his teacher[31] and in 'Nyāya Vārtika Tātparya Tika' he refers to Trilochana as his teacher.[32] On this basis, some maintain that Trilochana could be none other than Jayanta Bhatta, the celebrated author of 'Nyāya Manjari'. And hence in the opinion Jayanta was prior to Vācaspati.

But this view is erroneous. It is based on wrong presumption since the title 'Nyāya Manjari' referred to in 'Nyāya Kanikā' might have been some Mimāmsa work. Further it is erroneous to identify Trilochana with Jayanta Bhatta for had Jayanta and Trilochana been one and the same person, Jayanta himself would have been the auther of new interpretations of the terms like 'avyapadeshya' and 'Vyavasaayaatmaka'. But the glaring fact is that Jayanta has not given such interpretations. In fact, he was not, aware of these views. But Vācaspati, clearly states that the source of his novel interpretations of the above mentioned terms, is his teacher Trilochana. Hence it is quite just possible that Jayanta and Vācaspati were contemporaries, not knowing each others views, may be due to geographical differences.[33]

Thus Jayanta also may be placed in the 9th century A.D.[34] And for Vāeaspati the limits 840 - 900 are all that we can fix. He cannot have flourished either in the 10th or after the 10th century.

Thus to fix the date of Vāeaspati Mishra we need not merely confine ourselves to the directions of some scholars like Prof. Cowell,[35] Barth,[36] Macdonell,[37] at whose hands much of evidence is left untouched. These dates are unconvincing when compared to Vāeaspati's own statement. So these dates prove a failure. In fact to assign a period as late as the 10th century or 11th century to Vāeaspati Mishra is impossible in the face of the strong evidence found in his own works, especially Bhāmatī, which is valuable as a source of reliable information as quoted and explained earlier. This reference in Bhāmatī which gets strengthened thoroughly, prevents one to place Vāeaspati in the 10th (or later than it) century. Further the priority of Vāeaspati to Udayana prevents one from placing him later than 10th century.

All these go to show that Vāeaspati lived in all approximate certainty not earlier or later than the period 841 - 900 A.D.

Care however should be taken to remember that there existed a later Vāeaspati in Bengal (1380 A.D.)

who is supposed to have written a commentary on Sriharsha's 'Khaṇḍana Khaṇḍa Khādya' (The sweets of refutations) called 'Khaṇḍanoddhāra', who has nothing to do with Bhāmatī.[38]

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CHAPTER - II

THE NATURE OF KNOWLEDGE

1. Distinction between Svarupa Jnana and Vrtti Jñana:-

In Advaita Vedanta, knowledge is used to mean both absolute knowledge and relative or empirical/pragmatic knowledge. The absolute knowledge which is also called transcendental is non-relational; it has no real relation with empirical objects inasmuch as the latter, according to Advaita, are the creation of avidyā. If the former is called Svarūpa Jñāna, the latter is Vṛtti Jñāna. Svarūpa Jñāna though absolutely unrelated to objects, yet somehow becomes connected with objects which it reveals. The ordinary distinction between the knower, the known and the knowledge is apparent and hence empirical. There is every need for Advaita to postulate Vṛtti Jñāna in the empirical plane as that alone can account for the relation between the known and the knower. In fact we can talk of Advaita epistemology only in terms of Vṛtti Jñāna as the Svarupa Jnana is equated with the metaphysical principle in the system viz., Brahman. Thus the distinction between Svarūpa Jñāna and Vṛtti Jñāna is basic and central to Advaita Vedānta. It is against identifying these two Jñānas.

According to Vācaspati, Svarūpa Jñāna otherwise called pure consciousness is an independent and

everexisting reality. It is not a product of anything. It is neither produced nor destroyed. This means that it cannot undergo any transformation (Vikāra) and hence immutable (nirvikāra). It is eternal. In saying this, Vācaspati distinguishes his position from that of the Vijñānavādins, who regard it as 'anitya' (momentary) It is objectless (nirvishayaka), indivisible (akhaṇḍa) consciousness (Caitanya). It is nirvishayaka in the sense that it itself is not presented to anything else, though everything else is presented to it. It is undifferentiated and indeterminate, (nirvisesha). It does not admit of any difference within itself. Nor has it external relations for, there is nothing other than itself, with which it may be related. It is thus non-relational. It is also nirguṇa, as nothing could be attributed to it. It is 'shuddha anubhūti' or 'caitanya'. It is self-manifest (svayam Prakāsha) and everything gets manifested by it. It manifests itself in the state of samādhi and also in deep sleep. It has neither beginning nor end. It is transcedental, universal, eternal and uncaused. It is infinite. It cannot be doubted on the ground that such a conception is opposed to common experience, insofar as it is self-proved (svayam siddha) and self-manifest. It is universal and

constant. In otherwords according to Vācaspati Consciousness is the foundation of all determinate knowledge. This is indicated by the upanishadic statement, 'Brahman is reality, knowledge and Infinity'[1]

On the other hand, Vrtti Jñāna or empirical knowledge, may be taken as referring to empirical perspective when the Absolute is viewed under limitations. That is to say, Vrtti Jñāna is but the modification of the inner organ as illumined by the self.

Vrtti Jñāna, further, may be correct or wrong, depending upon the fact, whether or not it points to an object at the empirical level. Correct knowledge (i.e., when the idea corresponds to the object) may be called Jñāna and wrong knowledge (i.e., when there is no correspondence between the idea and the object) ajñāna. According to Advaita, both are forms of Absolute knowledge or svarūpa Jñāna, and should in no way be equated with the latter which is ontological. Thus, according to Advaita, empirical Jnāna (Vrtti Jñāna), which may be correct or wrong, is a form and hence an appearance of Svarūpa Jñāna, inasmuch as it is relative and conditional. Advaita has no hesitation to declare, that the so called vrtti Jñāna (or mental knowledge) is not eligible for the title 'knowledge' (Jñāna) Unless it is illumined by the principle of

consciousness viz., Brahman. Thus according to Advaita Vedānta, the internal organ bereft of the principle of consciousness (Sākshi) is as good as jada (inert); hence it is wrong to talk of even empirical Jñāna with reference to internal organ bereft of sākshi or consciousness. In this connection, Advaita has a claim to make and that is to declare that the empirical knowledge which is held to be final by the realistic schools is not really final and ultimate, but only phenomenal. To put it in different words, Advaita empirically speaking is against the subjective idealism of the Vijñānavāda Buddhism. He agrees with the realist in saying that in empirical knowledge the knower is as much different from the known, as an object from its cognition. All empirical knowledge according to Advaita, presupposes a subject that knows (pramātṛ chaitanya), the process of knowledge (pramāṇa chaitanya), and the object of knowledge (Prameya chaitanya). Knowledge, according to Vācaspati, is thus a variety of the modification of the internal organ, directed towards the object known and is of the nature of the intelligence residing in the agent.[2] It is certainly discursive in character, But speaking from the transcendental point, Advaita is against the empirical knowledge of the realistic schools. It is real because it is presented; it is false because it is denied in the end. Vācaspati is anxious to avoid the

complete unreality and illusoriness of a false presentation. Thus there is an element of realism in his system. But it is not real in the metaphysical sense. In other words, Vācaspati accepts psychological realism as well as the metaphysical idealism in his theory of knowledge. That is to say, so long as the transcedental intuition does not dawn upon us, the comparatively realistic consciousness persists. Thus Vācaspati is alive to the distinction between empirical illusion and empirical truth, whereas, Prakāshānanda, the author of 'Vedānta Siddhānta Muktāvali' (16th century) dispenses with the distinction. In other words, if Vācaspati maintains, in spite of his metaphysical idealism, a realistic element in knowledge and objectivity of reference in perception, Prakāshānanda's is a throughgoing solipsistic idealism. If Vācaspati talks of objectless knowledge, it is because reality is non-relational, pure, indivisible, infinite, one and ultimate. Hence the so called Vṛtti Jñāna must be given a conditional status.

Thus according to Advaita, knowledge in itself or Absolute knowledge (svarūpa Jñāna) is extraneous to and independent of psychic apparatus. It is Brahman itself. In this respect, Advaita distinguishes itself from the Nyāya view according which knowledge is but a quality of the soul

that takes its rise as a result of collocation of manas, soul, sense organs and the objects. It is also exactly here that Advaita distinguishes its position from the Pūrva Mīmāmsa, according to which knowledge is but the result of Karma of the soul (karma Jnāta).

Now a relevant question that raises its head here is: How to come into grips with the ultimate reality? It is of course, through antahkarana vrtti, says Vacaspati. According to him, valid knowledge is antaḥkaraṇa vṛtti ((modification of the internal organ) which is of the nature of intelligence residing in the agent. This antahkarana vrtti when carried on with relentless meditation on the ultimate truth (Brahman) results in the intuition of Brahman. Though, Brahman the ultimate reality, appears to be conditioned by antahkarana, at the stage of final cognition, it (antaḥ-karaṇa) is itself on the brink of destruction - says he.[3] Thus in the stage of final cognition, the antaḥkaraṇa vṛitti, (in the form of 'aham Brahmāsmi,' I am Brahman) ends up in the intuition of Brahman by destroying itself just as the dust of the clearing nut (kūtaja seed) mixed with muddy water removes the dirt and disappears itself making the water clear.[4] Similarly the fire born of friction of bamboos in a forest does not spare the bamboos which generate fire; and when the whole forest is consumed, it dies, out of itself. Thus, in the view of Vācaspati, it cannot be argued

that the antaḥ-karaṇa vṛtti, being itself of the nature of nescience cannot destroy nescience. On the otherhand by a prolonged meditation with diligence, the antaḥkaraṇa vṛtti, though of the nature of nescience, ends up in the intuition of Brahman, that itself disappearing in the end, argues Vācaspati.[5] This view is technically termed prasaṃkhyāna*

2. Self-luminosity of Knowledge:

A further question of vital importance to be considered here is whether knowledge is self-luminous or not. According to Vācaspati, as for all Advaitins, knowledge is self-luminous (Svayam Prakāsha) and everything else gets manifested by it. It reveals every other object not, that itself being revealed by any other entity. If it becomes an object to a second consciousness, it loses its title to consciousness and will no longer remain as consciousness. Thus according to Vācaspati, the essential nature of consciousness consists in not being an object of knowledge. Citsukha gives a similar argument in his Tattva Pradeepika.[6]

This view of Vācaspati is against the Nyāya view that knowledge is 'para prakasha' (other illumined). According to the latter, it is only an act of introspection (anuvyavasāya) that certifies its existence. They hold that all knowledge must be cognised by a subsequent knowledge, when there is an enquiry about it. Thus the primary cognition of objects

*Vide Chapter VII

illumines the object alone and does not reveal itself nor the self.[6(a)] However they hold that the cognition is later on revealed by introspection which always reveals it.

Vācaspati, in his Bhāmatī establishes the Svayam Prakāshtva of knowledge by a very interesting piece of dialectic. He asks: If the cognition in which the object and the self manifest themselves (as maintained by the Prābhākaras) inert or self-manifest? If it is inert then both the object and the self would be inert; then there would result darkness (non-manifestation) for the whole universe, there being no revealer; Nor can it be held that cognition though itself not revealing, yet makes known both the object and the self, just as the eye, though in itself unperceived, perceives everything else; for to make known is to produce cognition and the cognition that is produced being inert, the knowledge of things v becomes impossible. This would amount to saying that the blind leads the blind. The subsequent cognitions, if admitted, again being inert, cannot make the object known. Thus there would be infinite regress. (This is Vācaspati's criticism of the Nyāya view that knowledge is paraprakāsha) Therefore, Vācaspati concludes that, consciousness (Samvit) must be acknowledged to be self-manifest. Stated in other

words, Consciousness should not be regarded as depending on anything else for its revelation.[7]

Now we are faced with a difficulty. Even granting that consciousness is self-revealed it cannot be maintained that it reveals the objects insofar as the latter are held to be essentially inert (jada). That is to say, the objects cannot be taken to be revealed simply because they are brought into relation with the self-revealing consciousness, for it is too much to assume that a mere relation with something self-revealed qualifies the objects (which are inert) to be revealed by the former. If it be said that it is of the very nature of the self-luminous consciousness to be revealed to the object, then in that case, Vācaspati points out, it is as logical as the inference that because the son is a scholar, the father should also be regarded as a scholar, which is absurd.[8] This is Vācaspati's criticism against the Prābhākara's view that consciousness is a function of atman or self. The Prābhākara regards both the object and the self as inert and that the light of consciousness (samvit), having the self as its locus, illumines the object.[8(a)]

Again if it is argued by the Prābhākaras that it is of the very nature of self-luminous consciousness to manifest itself along with the manifistation of the object

and the self and that there is no revelation of consciousness without the manifestation of the object and the self, then Vācaspati asks: If consciousness different from the manifestation of consciousness on the one hand, and the manifestation of the object and the self, on the other? If it is different from the manifestation of consciousness of the objects and self, then consciousness would no longer be self-manifest, for it then depends on something, other than itself, for its revelation. Thus consciousness, in that case cannot manifest the object and the self.

If however consciousness is not different from the manifestation of the consciousness of the object and the self - this does not fare well - for then consciousness becomes identical with the manifestation of the consciousness of the object and the self; the argument then loses all its force, for it lacks advancement as it reduces itself to a repeated statement.[9]

Furthermore, the consciousness of absent objects such as the past and the future cannot be simultaneous or in conjunction with the objects themselves. It cannot be argued that since there is generated the cognition of rejection or acceptance or indifference relating to that as content, there is concomitance with the object - maintains

Vācaspati, inasmuch as the cognition of rejection etc., like the consciousness of the object itself cannot intelligently have past or future objects as its contents. If it is further argued by the Prābhākaras, the supporters of the inert nature of the object and the self, that because of giving rise to rejection etc., the cognition of rejection etc., too have the object as content, even so, the consciousness of the object too has object as content, then Vācaspati asks: Since the conjunction of the body with the self that putsforth effort is the cause of the setting up and cessation of bodily activity in respect of an object, is conjunction too a manifestation of the object? Obviously the Prābhākaras have to answer that because of its inertness, the conjunction of the body and the self is not a manifestation of the object. This would amount to saying, that though consciousness is self-manifest, its luminosity, like that of a glowworm, is only in respect of itself; however it is inert in respect of objects.[10]

Vācaspati further argues that the material things cannot be object of the self which is of the nature of pure consciousness. The objects cannot be of the very nature of consciousness, as the Vijñānavādins say, for they (the objects) are experienced as finite, as long or gross, while light manifests itself as internal; it is neither gross nor subtle,

neither short nor long. That is to say, the objects have extension and magnitude and are always perceived as external whereas pure consciousness is purely internal, having no extension or magnitude. Hence the material things cannot be the object of the self. Therefore Vācaspati concludes that it is fit to hold that the object which is other than the self-manifest, is certainly indeterminable like the second moon experienced along with the moon.[11] This consciousness being internal, one, immutable, without parts and hence eternal, is identical with the self — asserts Vācaspati. It is the very essence (Svarūpa) of the self. It is not something possessed by the self, but self itself. In this Vācaspati distinguishes himself from the standpoint of Nyāya, which regards consciousness as one of the qualities of atman.

Thus, according to Vācaspati self-luminous consciousness is the same as the self as it is immediate, everpresent and is indubitable, without in any way, being an object of consciousness. It is the very essence (svarūpa) of the self. It is the direct and the immediate revelation of the self-revealing thought. In this respect, Vācaspati distinguishes himself from both Kumārila and Prabhākara. According to Kumārila consciousness is not immediate but is only inferable from the manifesting quality (Jñātatā), of objects, when they are known by us in consciousness, the theory called the

Jñātatā theory of consciousness.[12] And according to Prabhakara, consciousness at once revelas, the knowledge, the object of knowledge and the knower (triputi). It is like a lamp which illuminates both the object and the self. According to him, the self depends upon cognition of objects for its revelation; it does not manifest itself alone, but is always revealed with the revelation of objects.

Now, to support the view that there can be divisions in consciousness, it may be argued that differences among objects which are indeterminate introduce differences into consciousness which is determinate. Vācaspati asserts that it is unsound to argue so, for that would mean the determination of the determinate by something indefinable — which is absurd. It is too much to argue so.[13]

Vācaspati argues that the self not being other dependent for its manifestation and being without parts, cannot be an object of cognition.[14] If the possibility of knowing the self is admitted, then the known self would become a not-self. Only that whose manifestation is other dependent and which has parts appears other than what it is; it comes to be apprehended in its general nature but not in its specific nature, because of defect in the organs of cognition. However, the innerself not being other dependent for its manifestation does not require for the knowledge of itself any organs by defects in which it would itself become defective.

The upshot of the above interesting discussion by Vācaspati is that pure consciousness is self-revealing and that there is no revelation of the conscious or the un-conscious as such by another and finally that the object comes to be revealed only when it is in illusory identification (tadatmya adhyāsa) with pure consciousness.

The Prābhākaras again object: Ātman cannot be regarded as the substrate of the superimposed object as it is impartite (since in all cases of superimposition, the object is partly known and partly unknown). Hence it follows that there can be no superimposition both when there is complete apprehension and when there is total non-apprehension.[15] Vācaspati meets this objection this: The manifestation of unitary consciousness is possible (for instance, 'this is silver') when there is non-difference between the insentient object and samvit and this non-difference can be explained only on the basis of the superimposition of the object on the pure consciousness.[16] The intelligent self, asserts Vācaspati, is infact the object of the concept 'I'. It is true that inner self being self manifest is not an object and is without parts, but yet having attained to the state of the jīva, though not really defined by the particular defining conditions posited by indeterminable beginningless nescience such as the intellect,

the mind, subtle and gross bodies etc., appears as if *defined;* ~~different~~; though not an object, he appears as the object of the concept 'I'[17] All this in other words is because of avidyā, the dividing force, the finitising principle.

Thus according to Vācaspati, knowledge is self-luminous and that it is the same as the self. No difference whatsoever exists between the self and consciousness. Consciousness is but the very self. It illumines itself and by itself.

Padmapāda, in his Pañchapādika, also maintains the same thing. He contends that the self is of the nature of self-revealing pure consciousness. It ~~x~~ comes to be called experience (anubhava) when it appears in connection with other objects and as atman when it is by itself.[18]

Prakāshātman substantiates Padmapāda's account of self-revealing consciousness, in his Vivaraṇa. He maintains that self-revelation of pure consciousness is not due to any other self-revealing cause, but itself.[19]

3. <u>Validity of Knowledge</u>:

The discussion on the self-luminosity of knowledge now brings us to the most important issue, viz.,

whether knowledge is intrinsically valid or does it require any other means to certify it. That is, is validity imbedded in the nature of knowledge or does it depend on something else? In short, the question is: Is knowledge self-valid or other-valid?

With regard to the problem of the validity of knowledge, there are mainly two theories, in Indian Philosophy. They are: (1) Svataḥ-Prāmāṇya-Vāda — the theory which advocates that the truth or validity of knowledge is self constituted and self-evident and (2) Parataḥ Prāmāṇya Vāda — the theory which maintains that validity of knowledge is not self constituted but imported from without. That is, according to this theory, knowledge is not self-evident, its validity depends entirely upon something outside — the extraneous cause. If the Mīmāṃsakas and the Vedāntins subscribe to the former,[19(a)] the Naiyāyikas subscribe to the latter.

According to Sāṃkhya, both validity and invalidity are inherent in the cognition itself what is valid is always valid what is invalid is always invalid. Both are, in the opinion of Sāṃkhya, to be admitted in knowledge. The Naiyāyikās, on the other hand, hold that both validity and non-validity are proved by extraneous causes lying outside the nature and

existence of knowledge. The Buddhists hold that invalidity inheres in all cognitions, but validity is established by something else viz., the capacity to lead to a fruitful activity (artha kriyā kāritva).[19(b)] As against this, the Mīmāṃsakas and the Vedāntins maintain that validity is self-evident and it is only invalidity that is determined by extraneous causes.

To elaborate, according to the Naiyāyikas knowledge is simply knowledge; it is neither valid nor invalid. They contend that knowledge is certified to be true or false (valid or invalid) by the other and not by itself. They argue that the g validity or otherwise of knowledge depends on other conditions like the doshas and gunas ((defects and merits) of the organs of perception etc.[19(c)]

Pramā or truth, according to them, consists in the correspondence of ideas with objects. But this correspondence cannot be known straightway. They hold that it is to be inferred from the capacity to lead to fruitful activity. True or valid knowledge is that which leads one to action, i.e., if it leads to the attainment of desired result, it is valid knowledge, otherwise it is invalid knowledge. Thus according to the Naiyāyikas valid knowledge is but pragmatic knowledge. The validity of knowledge is established

by paratah or something other than the constituents of knowledge. It is paratah, both in its origination (utpatti)[19(d)] and apprehension (Jnāpti). The Naiyāyikas hold that in its origination, right knowledge depends on some external cause (say absense of defect etc.,) other than constituents of knowledge. Thus validity of knowledge has got to be established by an inference based on correspondence leading to fruitful activity.

Even with regard to apprehension of validity (Jnāpti), the Naiyāyikās hold that, it is also not self-evident; for if validity were self-apprehended, then there would be no doubt with regard to a cognition.[20] But cognition itself cannot assume the certainty of validity and hence it follows that validity is not self apprehended.

As opposed to the paratah-prāmāṇya vāda of the Naiyāyikās, the Svatah-prāmanya vada of the Mīmāmsakas and the Vedāntins, holds that validity of knowledge is prior to verification.[20(a)] Infact verification presupposes and only confirms the truth or validity of knowledge. In verification truth is discovered and not invented. Validity is already present in knowledge. It is constitutive of knowledge itself and is not the result of extraneous elements or conditions.[21] The Mīmāmsakās hold that all knowledge is self-valid as such.

They point out that validity is not produced by any other causal condition than those of knowledge. Prabhakara opines that cognition is self-valid, and self apprehended. Validity is cognised along with cognition itself. Both the Mimāmsakas and the Vedāntins agree in taking validity to be known through the very elements of knowledge themselves.

The sāmkhya view that both validity and invalidity are intrinsic to knowledge can be criticised. It should be pointed out that the sāmkhya view is untenable inasmuch as the same knowledge cannot be both valid and invalid. It is self-contradictory to argue so.

Vācaspati shows much zeal in refuting the Buddhist and the Nyāya contention that the validity of knowledge depends on extraneous conditions. He criticises this view of practical efficiency and the inherence of reality as a genus (Sattā-Sāmānya-Samavāya), as the admission of these leads to a duality.[22] If practical efficiency or artha-kriyākāritva is admitted as a test of reality or validity of knowledge, then, argues Vācaspati, one has to land in infinite regress inasmuch as one has to postulate a second practical efficiency to determine the validity of second knowledge and so on. Hence manifestation (Prakāsha i.e., knowledge) alone has to be admitted as constituting the

validity or truth —— concludes Vācaspati.[23]

Thus according to Vācaspati, for cognition there is self-validity through the very fact of its conveying knowledge and not through its constancy to its content.[24] Knowledge itself is the means of its own validation. It reveals its own validity and does not require anything else to establish its validity.

Similarly, Vidyāraṇya in his Vivaraṇa Prameya Saṃgraha, refutes the Buddhist view that invalidity is intrinsic to knowledge. The Buddhist cannot maintain that invalidity is intrinsic to knowledge on the ground that it (invalidity) is the absence of validity insofar as as it is without any valid reason (hetu). Doubt, error, nescience etc., are not mere absence of knowledge but are positive knowledge —— asserts Vidyāraṇya approving Kumārila. As invalidity of knowledge is produced by defects in the causes of the knowledge and is liable to sublation by the right knowledge of the object, it must be concluded that invalidity is not intrinsic to knowledge —— argues Vidyāraṇya.[25]

Vācaspati, like the Mīmāṃsakās opines that knowledge is self-valid. However, he differs from the Mīmāṃsakās in his conception of valid cognition. He defines valid cognition as

a cognition which is not previously known and is also not contradicted.[26] Truth is abiding eternal and non-contradictory[27]. He thus excludes false knowledge from the conception of validity. But according to Kumārila pramā means knowledge which induces one to practical action.[27(a)] In Vācaspati there is no reference to action.

Again, according to Vācaspati, in the definition of pramā, the word 'anadhigata' (not previously known) should be taken as excluding memory or smrti from the scope of pramā or valid cognition as it (memory) is already known. The word 'abādhita' (not contradicted) should be taken to exclude wrong knowledge, as it is always contradicted. Vācaspati points out that all the different theories regarding the validity of knowledge might be reduced to the theory of non-contradictoriness. This pronounced view of Vācaspati may be taken as overcoming the defect of the correspondence theory of truth, according to which, the validity of knowledge consists in its correspondence with facts; for a legitimate question may be put to the Naiyāyika as to how he comes to know that knowledge and reality correspond? Nor can it be inferred from the fact of harmony of experience as there is no guarantee that the future will not contradict it. Vācaspati's theory of non-contradictoriness is free from all these difficulties in that he holds that valid knowledge is that which remains uncontradicted for ever.

In this sense Vācaspati's explanation of the validity of knowledge is far more satisfactory.

4. <u>The Theory of error</u>:

Vācaspati, as seen in the foregoing pages, is a supporter of the view that knowledge is self-luminous (svayam prakāsha) and self valid (svapramāṇa) both in respect of its origin (utpatti) and ascertainment (Jnāpti) Now it may be pointedly asked as to how error arises. This takes us to the consideration of the problems connected with error, such as the cause of error, i.e., whether the error is brought into being by an instrumental cause alone or also by the material cause, the nature of error, etc., The problem error, is thus, no less significant than the problem of Truth or Reality. The knowledge about Reality, according to Vācaspati, should necessarily presupposed the discussion of false and valid cognitions. Accordingly he discusses various theories of error like asatkhyāti, ātmakhyāti, akhyāti anyatha khyati etc., and refutes them from the standpoint of the celebrated Anirvachaneeyakhyāti of Advaita. The theory of error, as discussed and developed by Vācaspati in his Bhāmatī is thus an all absorbing topic.

Vācaspati's treatment and refutation of other theories of error such as asatkhyāti ātmakhyāti, etc. may now be briefly considered.

a. Asat khyāti

Vācaspati, first starts with the statement of asatkhyāti of the Śunyavādāns or the Mādhyamika Buddhists, according to whom the object that is presented in an illusion is wholly non-existent (Asat)[28] i.e., in an illusion, a non-existent thing, (say, silver in the 'shell-silver illusion) is apprehended as existent.

Vācaspati's criticism of Asatkhyāti

Vācaspati refutes Asat khyāti through the Akhyāti vāda of the Mīmāṁsakas. The Mīmāṁsaka strongly objects to the Buddhist's view of error. The world which is absolutely non-existent devoid of any capacity, devoid of any true essence cannot, he argues, be the object of experience, and its superimposition on the intelligent self is out of question.[29] The Buddhist proceeds to answer the Mīmāṁsaka, that though objects of experience are wholly devoid of any capacity to appear, the respective, cognitions themselves give rise to the appearance of the non existent through the capacity, called nescience. It is this nescience, that makes the non-existent (asat) appear.[30]

To this the Mīmāṁsaka retorts: What is this faculty of cognition whereby it makes the unreal appear? What is it that is capable of? If it is unreal, is it effected or only made known by it?[31]

Now, it cannot be effected, argues, Vācaspati through the mouth of the Mimāmsaka, since that is unintelligible in the case of the unreal. It cannot be even what is made known inasmuch as, there is no other cognition known other than that which makes manifest. Further, there would result infinite regress, as what is thus manifested being unreal requires a new cognition to be connected with; and this again a new cognition and so on.[32]

To come out of the above difficulty the 'Śunyavādi Buddhist may argue that it is the very essence of cognition to manifest the unreal. But this does not improve the situation in any way, for a legitimate question may be asked: If it be said that it is the very essence of cognition to manifest the unreal, what is this relation between the real and the unreal? In answer, if it is said, by the Buddhist, that the relation of cognition which is real, is made determinate under the control of what is unreal, Vācaspati ridicules, through the mouth of the Mimāmsaka, this answer of the Buddhist (with the sarcastic remark): "How very fortunate is this poor cognition that attains to determination of even through the unreal!"[33] Strictly speaking cognition cannot do anything thereto inasmuch as it is the support of any such thing. Being the support, it would be

inappropriate, says the Mīmāmsaka, in the case of what is unreal.

Now, the Buddhist slightly modifies his position and says that the cognition is not controlled by the unreal but that it is of the very nature of cognition, not to appear apart from the unreal.

Again, Vācaspati points to the folly of the argument thus: "Lo! unfortunate indeed is this partiality for the unreal, whereby cognition is invariably linked to the unreal, though neither originating therefrom nor of the same nature as that".[34] Thus the inevitable conclusion, according to the Mīmāmsaka is that the wholly non-existent (atyanta asat), as it lacks true essence, cannot become object of experience. Thus the Mīmāmsaka points out that the Buddhist explanation of error cannot satisfy the philosophic thought, as illusion without any substrate is inconceivable. If silver be absolutely non existent, it must remain unapprehended for ever. Hence absolutely non-existent thing cannot be apprehended as existent. Thus Vācaspati, through the mouth of the Mīmāmsaka refutes asatkhyātivada.

b. Atmakhyati

Again, Vācaspati is not prepared to accept the 'ātmakhyāti vāda' of the Vijñāna vādins or yogāchara Buddhists according to whom the object that is presented in an illusion is wholly mental, which is wrongly projected as something external. That is, in the shell-silver illusion it is the internal or mental idea of silver that comes out and manifests as an external object after being superimposed on the shell. Thus according to him, in an illusion, a subjective idea is apprehended as an external object. The Buddhist contends that there are no external objects but only ideas or Vijñānas. In the shell silver illusion, the internal idea of silver appears to be a real external object. Vācaspati in his Bhāmatī, beautifully expounds ātmakhyāti vāda in the pūrvapaksha. There are no external things, but only external falsehood created by the impressions of beginningless nescience. What is of the form of cognition (Vijñāna) is imposed on it. The Buddhist justifies his position thus: He believes in the general rule that whatever is experienced in a particular form should be accepted in that form. If a cognition of greater force sublates it, then there would result the sublating cognition, 'This is not silver'. This should be understood as sublating the 'this'

element alone and should not be taken to extend to the 'silver' element. The Buddhist argues that it would be better to take it that the attribute "thisness" alone is sublated, not the substrate silver also; for if the substrate "silver" were sublated, then both the silver and its attribute of "thisness" would be sublated. The upshot of this discussion is that silver which is sub-lated in respect of externality, is by presumption confined to knowledge within us. Hence the imposition outside of what is of the form of cognition.[35] Thus the vijñāna vādin argues that only cognitions (Vijñānas) which form a series, are real and that there are no external objects separate from cognitions.

Vācaspati's refutation of Ātmakhyāti

Vācaspati is not prepared to accept the above argument of the Buddhist. For if silver etc., are of the form of cognition, then it should be established either by experience (i.e., perception) or by inference. If it could be established by experience then, it must be either the cognition of silver or the cognition that sublates it. Now it is not the perception of silver, for that makes known silver as having for its substrate, the "this", not what is within; for in that case the cognition would be

of the form "I am silver" insofar as the cogniser is non-different from the cognition.

Now the Vijñāna vādin comes to defend his position thus: He argues that the delusive cognition itself determines its own form to be external and hence refuses to appear as the substratum of 'I' or aham-kāra; and that it is only from the sublating cognition that the form of cognition can be known.[37]

To this, Vāc spati, through the month of the Mīmāmsaka counterquestions: Does that distinguish from silver, the object present before us, or does that also show of it that its nature is of the form of cognition? The Buddhists answer that it (sublating cognition) has the function of making known the prior experience to have the form of cognition, smacks of his ignorance inasmuch as the sublating cognition can never make known the prior experience to have the form of cognition.[37(a)] —— points out Vācaspati.

Again the Buddhist maintainins his position by saying that it is known that silver is of the form of cognition only and is not external, by the fact of the negation of the presence of silver before us.[38]

Vācaspati (through the Mīmāmsaka) replies by saying 'no'; for, from the denial of the nonapprehension of non-proximity, it would become non-proximate or remote to the cogniser. But in reality it does not follow, what is non-proximate to the cogniser is extremely proximate to him. That is the fact of negation of the presence of silver establishes only the utter difference of silver from cognition and not identity.[38(a)]

Further, the Buddhist cannot argue that the cognition of silver is silver itself as occasioned in nacre inasmuch as it is opposed to experience. If all reality is mental in character, there would be no criterion to distinguish between truth and error.

Again, it cannot be argued that cognition is the basis as existent alone, since that would be too wide a basis in the sense that existentiality being common to all things it would follow, that any of them could be the basis.[39]

The implied upshot of the above discussion by Vācaspati, is that, the Vijñāna vādins are not justified in making use of the concept of "externality" as they deny reality to any object outside. And the very contention of the Vijñānavādins, viz., what is internal appears as external, proves the very existence of external objects.

Thus the Buddhist is compiled to admit, that nacre (or shell) as, an external object exists; otherwise manifestation of silver becomes impossible. Thus one can talk of error only when there is an object lying outside which serves as the substratum of error. Vācaspati thus brings out through the mouth of the Mīmāṁsaka the unsoundness of Ātmakhyātivāda.

e. Akhyāti

The Mīmāṁsaka after thus refuting Ātmakhyāti, maintains his own stand point, regarding the nature of error. It is what is called Akhyāti. According to it, strictly speaking, there is no error. He opines that in shell-silver illusion, the sublating consciousness denies neither the 'silver" nor the "thisness" but the empirical usage of silver, occasioned by the non-apprehension of distinctness. His position may be stated thus: In the case of shell-silver illusion, there are two kinds of cognitions —— (i) the 'silver' and (ii) the 'this'; one due to memory and the other due to experience (perception). The "this" here is the apprehension of a mere object in front of us; the class nature of "shellness", though it is there, is not apprehended because of a defect, the apprehended

bare "that", because of similarity, calls up the memory of silver, through reviving the impressions of the former experience of silver. That memory though of the nature of an apprehension of what has been apprehended, because of the loss of the element of the content, due to a defect, stands as bare apprehension. In other-words, according to the Mīmāmsaka, error consists in taking a composite view of these two cognitions. It consists in the non-apprehension of the difference between the memory of the silver and the apprehension of the bare object before us. To put it in different words, the cognition of shell as silver is due to the non-apprehension of the difference between the presented object (viz.,the 'this') and the represented idea (viz., the 'silver'). And because of resemblance to the cognition of silver, the two cognitions "this" and Silver" bring out empirical usage as non-different and appositional designation. Thus according to the Mīmāmsaka, silver as seen in the shell is purely a memory image with the element of remembrance left out. And when there is sub-lation (as in the case of shell-silver illusion), the delusiveness of the prior cognition is because of the appositional designation of memory and apprehension

with reference to each other.[40] Thus according to the akhyātivāda, all cognition are to be recognised as valid.

Thus the Akhyātivādin declares that, when there is superimposition of silver etc., on shell, it is not due to or conditioned by, the cognition as something else as the Anyathākhyāti vādin maintains. Rather it is a delusion conditioned by the mixing up of the presented and represented cognitions.

d. Anyathākhyāti

The Naiyāyikas and the Bhātta school of Mimāmsa do not accept the akhyātivāda of the Prabhakara school of Mimāmsa. Their view, with regard to the nature of error, is what is called Anyathākhyātivāda, according to which the error consists in taking one thing for another. That is, the object appears as 'anyathā' as something other than what it is.[41] In the shell-silver illusion, for instance, shell is apprehended as otherwise (anyathā) i.e., as silver which exists in some other place. Thus according to Anyathākhyāti the illusion consists in perceiving silver not where it really is, but in the object shell.

Vācaspati's refutation of Akhyāti

Vācaspati proceeds to criticise akhyāti through the mouth of the anyathākhyātivādin. He objects to the contention of the Prābhākara school of Mīmāmsa, that, he who fails to distinguish between memory and apprehension, leads himself to illusion inasmuch as the activity of kneeling down to pick up silver cannot come about from the mere failure to apprehend the reciprocal difference between memory and apprehension or their respective spheres. Further the activity and speech of an intelligent being, Vācaspati points out, are themselves conditioned by apprehension, not that it results from bare non-apprehension.[42]

Now the Mīmāmsaka tries to improve his position. The delusiveness of silver results — he says not from bare nonapprehension but from memory and apprehension where their difference in respect of their nature and contents is not apprehended because of the similarity to the valid cognition of silver before us.[43]

To this, Vācaspati asks through the mouth of the anyathākhyāti vādin. Is the similarity of this to the valid cognition, the cause of empirical usage, by

being apprehended or by its bare existence without being apprehended?[44] If it is the former, then the apprehension must be of the form: "of the cognitions 'this' and 'silver' there is resemblance to valid cognition" and the form "Between those very two, non-difference is apprehended in respect of their nature or contents." Of these, the first one viz. the cognition, "this is like valid cognition" cannot lead to empirical usage in the same way as valid cognition. For instance take the cognition "Gavaya is like a cow". Certainly this does not induce activity in a man in respect of a gavaya, who actually sees a cow. The cognition "non-apprehension of the difference between those very two" is self-contradictory since, where there is non-apprehension of difference, it cannot be of the form "between the two". Reciprocally, when there is the apprehension "between the two" there cannot be non-apprehension of difference. Hence, concludes Vācaspati, that the non-apprehension of difference, not being itself apprehended is the cause of empirical usage by the bare fact of its existence.[45]

Now a legitimate question may be asked: Is it the cause of empirical usage through creating an imposition

or of itself without creating an imposition? It must be the former, opines Vācaspati, since the empirical usage of an intelligent being cannot intelligibly be consequent on ignorance.[46]

Now it cannot be objected that though it is true that the activity of an intelligent being is consequent not on ignorance; rather it is consequent on apprehension and memory whose distinctness is not known, for truly it is not the memory of the bare root-meaning of the word 'silver' that causes activity. It is undisputed that the activity of one who seeks silver is directed to the substrate of "this-ness". Vācaspati very clearly points out, that one cannot be active in respect of the substrate of "this-ness" unless one desires it.[47] Thus practical endeavour in relation to perception cannot be explained without the identification of silver with the shell. Further it is self-contradictory to say that one desires one thing and works for something else. Thus without knowing that it is silver which is the substrate of the "this-ness", one who seeks silver, cannot desire it.

Now, the akhyātivādin may argue that desire is due to the substrate of the "this-ness" not being apprehended

as not of the nature of that (silver). But Vācaspati says that it is not sound to argue so, for if it is not apprehended to be of the nature of silver, then it may be legitimately asked as to why one is not indifferent to it. The outcome of this discussion is that, this intelligent being should be declared as unsettled, being pulled in opposite directions by acceptance and indifference. It should be taken as settled by the acceptance of the imposition of silver on the substrate of "this-ness". Thus superimposition, is the cause of the activity of an intelligent being, contends Vācaspati.[48]

Thus Vācaspati points out that mere non-apprehension of the difference (distinction) cannot account for the activity to which the person subject to false perception is prompted. Vācaspati rightly argues that the activity of the conscious agent, must be due to knowledge. As this activity is directed towards the object (viz., the shell) there must be, Vācaspati opines, intermediary stages after the non-apprehension of the difference between the 'this' (presentation) and silver (memory), which have been ignored by the Prābhākara Mīmāṁsakas. The intermediary stages, thus, are: (i) Identifying silver with the 'this' (shell), (ii) the consciousness

that silver is of practical use, (iii) the cognition that distant object being silver will serve a practical need. The activity on the part of the percipient, presupposes all these stages.[49] The error, thus, in the opinion of Vācaspati, as for all Advaitins, is something positive and not that it consists in the failure to keep different perceptions distinct. The memory of silver in general cannot help one, says Vācaspati, to infer the advantageousness of the substrate of "this-ness" inasmuch as the 'silverness' would not be known to reside in the subject. Rather it should be said that the cognition of silver etc., has the object before one for its contents insofar as, it invariably induces activity in him who seeks silver as he who has the experience of "this is silver" while so experiencing it, indicates the substance in front with his finger etc.,[50] Thus Vācaspati points out that since the object of cognition is immediate, i.e., it is directly perceived, memory of the past object cannot be regarded as directly contributing to the possibility of error inasmuch as the object in the case of memory is not immediately present.[51]

Further the akhyātivādin cannot argue that if illusory cognitions be said to be inconstant to their

contents there would result loss of confidence in all the means of valid knowledge, for, according to Vācaspati, cognition is self-valid through the very fact of its conveying knowledge and not through its constancy to its contents.[52] Again, the akhyātivādin cannot convincingly maintain that error is due to the suppression of the remembered characteristic of silver (i.e., memory), inasmuch as he subscribes to the doctrine of self-luminousity and self-validity of all knowledge.

This is Vācaspati's refutation of Akhyāti. It is also elaborately criticised by Maṇḍana.[53]

e. Anirvacaneeya Khyāti

By taking the instance of mirage Vācaspati further refutes akhyātivāda and establishes his own anirvachaneeya khyāti. If it is maintained by the Mīmāmsaka that what is absolutely unreal devoid of capacity and true essence cannot be within the realm of experience then a question may be asked: Are the rays of water (mirage) real even as water (salila)? i.e., is the mirage real in the sense that it becomes the object of experience?[54]

To this, the Mīmāmsaka replies: "since the rays of water are not of the nature of water they are unreal in the nature of water (salila). According to him the essence of things is of two kinds: (i) real in respect of themselves and (ii) unreal in respect of things other than themselves. Vācaspati, in his exposition of the pūrva paksha, quotes a verse from Kumarila's śloka vārtika which runs thus: "The essence of things is grasped by some at some time or other either as real or as unreal in respect of themselves or in respect of others".[55]

To this, Vācaspati replies by putting a counter question: Is cognition of water in the rays (mirage) metaphysically true? If the answer is 'Yes' then being valid it would not be delusive. Thus it would not be sublated.[56]

To this, the Mīmāmsaka rejoins: He agrees with Vācaspati in saying that certainly it would not be sublated, provided it apprehended the rays as not of the nature of water. However, when apprehended as of the nature of water, it becomes delusive.[57]

To this, again Vācaspati retorts: Yes, of the rays whose nature is nonwaterness, their nature as waterness is not real; nor is it unreal for according to the Mīmāmsaka (Kumārila) "non-existence" is existence in another form, not anything else, as according to him, existence and non-existence are but co-existent aspects of everything. Thus the imposed form is not another thing. If it is another thing, it should be either the rays or the water in the Ganges, not "water here". Further if the particular place be not recollected, it should be merely of the form "water" not "here". Again, it cannot be admitted that this is something wholly unreal —— a mere falsehood devoid of all existence, since such a thing is not experienced. Therefore Vācaspati concludes that the water superimposed on the rays is neither real nor unreal; nor can it be both real and unreal as it is a contradiction in terms; in other words it must be recognized to be 'anirvacaneeya' (in-explicable).[58] This is how Vācaspati refutes the Mimāmsaka position and establishes the Vedāntic doctrine of inexplicability (anirvacaneeyavāda).

Vācaspati's criticism of Anyathākhyāti

Thus Vācaspati declares that in the case of shell-silver illusion, the only course left is to view silver as

superimposed on the shell. This means that different attributes other than its own are ascribed to the shell. That is to say, something appears as something else. This view is nothing but the anyathakhyati or apprehension of something as something else, which really is not. Here a relevant question may be asked: Is not Vācaspati a supporter of Anyathākhyāti?

'No' is the only answer to the question. Vācaspati may be taken to have clearly refuted Anyathākhyāti vāda insofar as the existence of error according to him, is closely bound up with its perception by some one, in the same place, and never perception in different places. This perception in the same place occurs, Vācaspati points out, only in superimposition. The Naiyāyika contention that at the time of illusory perception one perceives, the silver that is elsewhere through extra mental sense, does not hold water, as silver (in the case of "shell-silver" illusion") is actually presented to the perceiver thereby indicating purposeful action (such as kneeling down to pick up silver) on the part of the perceiver. The illusory silver, on the other hand, is an entirely new creation by avidyā with its two powers of projection and screening. Avidyā screens the real nature of the "this" or the locus

(āvarana); side by side with the screening action, goes on the projecting action of avidyā (vikshepa). That is to say, avidyā not only conceals the real nature of the "this" but also projects or creates in its place a new silver, which the percipient observes. It (silver) comes into existence with the perception and goes out of existence with the cessation of perception. Thus the silver the percipient observes, is not that of the market[59] but is an entirely new creation for the time being, on the shell, by avidyā. Avidyā, thus is the material cause of illusory silver.

Further the illusory silver, in the opinion of Vācaspati, is neither a positive nor a negative entity. It is neither an absolute śunya (tuccha) like the hare's horn nor an absolute 'sat' (Reality). It cannot be an absolute reality as it gets, Sublated. But absolute reality can never be sublated. It cannot be an absolute śunya, because it is perceived; an absolute śunya can never be perceived. As the illusory silver does not admit of being definitely described as 'sat' or 'asat' or as both, it should be termed 'sadasadvilakshana' (different from both 'sat' and 'asat'); it is anirvacaneeya (inexplicable)— contends Vācaspati.[60]

Thus if the object of error according to all other theories of error, is either 'sat' or 'asat', according to Vācaspati's anirvacaneeya khyati, it is neither 'sat' nor 'asat' but different from both; it is neither real nor unreal but something unique (sadasadvilakshaṇa). It should be noted that though Vācaspati in his Bhāmatī refutes asat khyāti and ātmakhyātivādas through the mouth of the akhyātivādin, and the akhyātivāda in turn by the Anyathākhyāti vādin, he does not spare even that.

Thus Vācaspati is no supporter of anyathākhyāti vāda as it is sometimes wrongly held as for instance Prof. S. Kuppuswamy Sastri. He is of the view that in the case of 'Sopādhika bhrama' i.e., delusion caused by the presence of an external adjunct, Advaitins are willing to accept the explanation of anyathākhyāti.[61] Sopādhika bhrama may be explained thus: when a white crystal is placed in the vicinity of a red flower, we mistake the white crystal to be red. Similarly a person suffering from jaundice mistakes a white shell to be yellow as the bile of the jaundiced person, in the opinion of Vācaspati, actually goes forth with the rays of light from the eyes and these apprehend the white crystal as

[illegible]

Thus the Advaitin's explanation of sopadhika bhrama is not the same as the Naiyāyikās' anyathā khyāti but something unique to the advaitin.[62(a)] And according to Vācaspati, as already pointed out, the assumption of the attributes of one thing in the case of another is untruth or anrtatā. That means indeterminability. Thus it follows that in all systems there is the admission of anirvacaneeya assumption of the attributes of onething in another.

Thus indeterminability must be admitted, though unwillingly, by all the khyāti vādins —— says Vācaspati.[63] This is further confirmed by Amalananda in his Vedānta Kalpataru, who declares that the illusory error is neither real nor unreal nor mental but an actual a creation for the time being, which is not determinable either as real or unreal.[64]

In conclusion it must be said that anirvacaneeya khyāti gives a most satisfactory account of the nature of error in illusory perception, as it attempts an adequate explanation, by taking into account all the aspects of the problem, whereas all other theories of error give only a partial explanation.[65]

This, in brief, is Vācaspati's treatment and refutation of other theories of error.

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CHAPTER - III

Perception and the concept of Bheda

1

Vācaspati's views on perception (Pratyaksha) and verbal testimony (Śabda) and his handling of the problems such as the status of verbal testimony or Śabda as a pramāṇa, its relation with other sources of knowledge etc., may now be considered. As Vācaspati in his Bhāmatī, does not dwell in more detail, on all the pramāṇās, only the problem of the relation between perception and verbal testimony is critically examined here.

Advaita, like the Bhātta school of Mimamsa, admits of six pramanas or the means of obtaining valid knowledge. They are: (i) perception (pratyaksha), (ii) Inference (Anumāna), (iii) Comparison (Upamāna), (iv) Verbal testimony (Śabda or āgama), (v) presumption (Arthāpatti) and (vi) Non-cognition (Anupalabdhi).

Perception, according to Advaita, is a pramāna which gives us knowledge of empirical things through sense contact. It is defined as the unique cause (karaṇa) of valid knowledge. The sense organs constitute the karana.[1] It is strictly limited to the phenomenal world.

Inference, in the opinion of the Advaitin, is also a specific means of knowledge. It is based on the

bed rock of perception. It is from inferential source that we derive the knowledge of fire on the hill, though we see there, not fire, but only smoke, which acts as a sign of fire. Thus inference is a process of arriving at truth not by direct observation, but by means of the knowledge of vyāpti or a universal relation between two things. It may be defined as a means of knowledge through which we derive the knowledge of one term of a relation which is not perceived through the knowledge of the other term which is perceived and is explicitly understood as invariably related to the first term.[1(a)] Inference, thus, only yields indirect and mediate knowledge. In the view of the Advaitin, inference too is limited to this phenomenal world.

Analogy or ~~or~~ upamana gives us knowledge of similarity between things. Advaita admits upamana as an independent means of valid knowledge. It invariably presupposes perception. For instance, the knowledge that "the cow is like gavaya" is the result of upamāna.[1(b)]

Verbal testimony or Śabda is the means to the knowledge of the Absolute Reality (viz., Brahman), which is transcedental, It is knowledge derived from the authority of the impersonal (apaurusheya) Veda.[1(c)] It is

also termed Śruti. It stands for the authority of the Vedas and the Upanishads which are record of what accured to the minds of seers, sages and saints in the moments of intense concentration. It is eternal wisdom. According to the Advaitin Śruti is the ultimate and the only means of knowing the ultimate reality as it is eternal, impersonal and infallible. The other sources of knowledge aim at only perceptual and conceptual knowledge.

Presumption or Arthāpatti aims at the reconcilation of two seemingly contradictory facts, by assuming something which explains both. It may thus be described as the postulation of what explains through the knowledge of what is to be explained.[1(d)] For instance, take the statement, 'Devadatta is alive and not present in the house'. There seems to be an apparent contradiction between two facts here viz., 'Devadatta is alive' and '(He) is not present in the house'. This has to be accounted for. And it can be accounted for only by presuming that he must be present in some place outside his house. That is, it is to be presumed that he is present elsewhere.

Presumption is of two kinds — Dṛṣṭārthāpatti — presumption from what is seen and śṛtārthāpatti — presumtion from what is heard.

Non-cognition or Anupalabdhi is the means through which we come to acquire knowledge about the non-existent. It is the unique cause of the knowledge of non-existence.[1(e)] It enables us to know the non-existence of a particular cognition. For instance, the absence of a jar somewhere. It is quite obvious that it cannot be the means to know Brahman inasmuch as Brahman is the everexistent reality. It is an independent source of the knowledge of non-existence.

2

Are Pramāṇas illusory?

Pramāṇas or means of knowledge according to Vācaspati are illusory, as in his view, as for all Advaitins, Brahman alone is real, all else other than Brahman being illusory. Pramāṇas in this sense are not absolutely real. How then about Śruti which is regarded as the ultimate means (antya pramana) to Brahman-realisation? Vācaspati's answer is that it too is illusory in character. Here three pertinent questions raise their heads: (1) If Śruti, which is regarded as an indispensable means for knowing the reality, is illusory, how can it reveal the Real to us? How can it enable us to 'know' the reality? Even if it can make us know the reality, how can that be real, that

itself being illusory? In that case can it be expected to tell us anything about the ultimate Reality or the Absolute? (ii) Valid knowledge is really the determination of truth. How can the means of knowledge which are instruments thereto, have for their locus what is characterised by nescience? That is to say, means of knowledge cannot find a locus in what is characterised by nescience, since their effect viz., knowledge (vidyā) is opposed to nescience (avidyā).[1(f)] The purpose of sacred teachings is to teach what is beneficial to man. This being opposed to nescience, cannot have reference to what is characterised by nescience. (iii) Is it not true that to accept the view that scripture is illusory, is to view it as non-authoritative and hence to reject it forthwith as a means of Brahman realisation? If Advaita can reject Śruti as illusory, how can it claim itself to be an orthodox (Vaidika) system?

These questions though appear to be formidable, are not really so in the opinion of Vācaspati. To take up the first question. A pramana may be illusory. Yet it can reveal, says Vācaspati, what is real, as for instance dream objects. They are certainly illusory as they get sublated by waking knowledge. Yet don't they produce

effects which are real? The rope-snake which is illusory produces real fear. Here we see that the cause is unreal, but the effects are real. In a like manner, scripture though illusory in character, can certainly reveal the real. There is nothing repugnant regarding this supposition. Thus what is illusory can reveal what is real.

The second objection in the opinion of Vācaspati, is no objection at all. He answers the objection by saying that the functioning of the means of valid knowledge is unintelligible, if one is devoid of the conceit of 'I' and mine in the body, senses etc., which are the result of avidyā; the immutable, eternal intelligent self which is incapable of transformation, cannot be active of itself. It is the internal organ that functions and never Ātman, which is devoid of all activity.[2] Therefore by the superimposition of the nature of intellect etc which are active, the self becomes active and the functioning of pramāṇas becomes possible. And without their functioning, there would be no empirical usage. Moreover they cannot function without control, and control is not possible except by a body on which the nature of the self is superimposed.[3] That is, to be a knower is to be an agent in respect of knowledge. And this consists in initiating

all causal conditions of the possibility of knowledge i.e., Pramāṇas or the valid means of knowledge. The unattached indifferent (udāseena) self, cannot be a knower, in the absence of superimposition. Where there is no knowership, the means of knowledge (Pramāṇas) cannot function.[4] Thus Vācaspati concludes that means of valid knowledge have reference to nescience.[5]

Thus according to Vācaspati avidyā is the basis of all empirical knowledge and epistemology. No wonder that the Advaitic conception of Reality shakes the very foundation of empirical knowledge. In the opinion of Vācaspati, as for all Advaitins, avidyā is not mere ignorance in the ordinary sense. On the other hand w all phenomenal knowledge is simply avidyā.

3

Status of Śruti as a Pramāṇa

To take up the third question. When the Advaitin says that the scripture (śruti) too is illusory what is it that is really meant? Does it mean that the scripture is absolutely unreal like the merest skyflower? Vācaspati says a clear 'no' to this question. The Śruti is real and continues to be real only so long as Brahman, the

ultimate reality is not realised. It turns out to be illusory only on the onset of Brahman knowledge, but not prior to Brahman knowledge. As soon as Brahman-knowledge is intuited, so soon, Śruti as a source of knowledge turns out to be illusory. To a realised self there is neither veda nor vada. Thus Vācaspati is of the view that for all practical purposes the Śruti is real and it can produce valid knowledge of the real; it never ceases to be authoritative.[6] This view of Vācaspati can be traced to Shankara. Shakara is of the opinion that Śruti is valid to one who is ignorant of the truth of non-duality. To one who has realised the truth of non-duality, the vedas are no vedas. Thus according to Shankara with the realisation of the non-dual reality such distinctions as those between the teacher and the taught, the scripture and its teaching etc., vanish, as all these are due to avidya.[7] Śruti is of supreme importance in that it repudiates the superimposed difference.

Thus, there is nothing queer about the position of Śruti in Advaita Vedānta. Brahman realisation, according to it is beyond all human description, beyond speech and words. Hence whatever is understood even through the śāstras

is not ultimately real but only qualified (saguṇa) Brahman. Then a plain question may be asked: What is the status of Śruti in knowing Brahman? What role does it play as a pramāṇa? The Advaitins answer is that Śruti is only informative. It simply reminds us of an ever-present fact. It does not create it.[8] It intimates what is otherwise not known. It hints at the real negatively as the real cannot be positively described. By its negative statements it shows the Real (Brahman) to be the pure subject, unrelated with any object. It removes all specifications and distinctions which are falsely imposed on Brahman due to avidya.[9] It purports to show what the reality is not, by its negative ('neti' 'neti') method. The function of Śruti, in this sense, is purely negative. It suggests that however fine and lofty the expressions may be, they are still expressions and they cannot be expected to express the Absolute fully. It also goes to suggest that partial truths appear as truths so long as truth is not intuited in its entirety. It, thus, points to the futility of all possible human descriptions of Reality in positive terms. Thus the function of Sruti is essentially negative. That is to deny the false and to affirm the true. In the view of

Vācaspati, negation is really identical with the locus.[10]

The 'via negativa' ('neti' 'neti') method of Śruti, according to Vācaspati, has thus the important functions such as: (i) demonstrating the futility of thinking to know the ultimate truth, (ii) demonstrating the self-contradictions involved in the nature of thought, thus indirectly stressing the importance and value of intuition or (aparoksha Jñāna). The aspirant becomes deeply convinced of the transcendental truth through the natural and spontaneous denial by Śrutie. Thus according to Vācaspati, Śruti has a great service to render and that is to declare the all-time truth that truth can only be seen or intuited, but not understood in terms of logic or argument.

Now, if Śruti on the Advaitins own admission, is merely negative in its import, it may be asked, whether it will not lose its validity. 'No' says the Advaitin, for validity of Śruti is established through its own negation. The Advaitin is fond of quoting Dravidācharya: 'Siddham tu nivartakatvāt' (its validity is established by its own negation). If sruti first ascribes various qualities to Brahman, the ultimate reality, it is only to deny, in the

end, any and every quality to it. Śruti first being thus an instrument of knowing Brahman, eliminates all specifications and distinctions of Brahman and eliminates itself in the end. Thus, in the end Śruti ceases to be śruti, ceases to be a pramāṇa. It is 'antya pramāṇa' stated from the ontological stand point, śruti though a pramāṇa, is 'mithyā'. It asks us to realise Brahman by being it. This is the position of Advaitin as to the status of Śruti. In essence, Vācaspati accepts this view.

4

Relation between Śruti and reason

A further question which would naturally arise in this context is: what is the relation between Śruti and reason (tarka)? Vācaspati is of the categorical view that reason (tarka) is not a means of establishing the ultimate reality, as it is not a pramāṇa. Śruti or Śabda is the only pramāṇa[11] that establishes the ultimate reality, viz. Brahman. Yet Vācaspati does not underestimate the role of reason in its own way. Reason definitely has a dominant role to play in understanding the scriptural truth. It acts as an aid to remove ~~to remove~~ the haunting doubts of mind. Its function consists in exposing and eliminating untruth. This function of reason is most important inasmuch as it

is a necessary condition for knowing the nondual reality. Its role in Advaita takes the form which may be explained under the technical terms Śravana and Manana. The seeker after truth, according to Advaita, moves towards the realisation of the non-dual reality only by passing himself through arguments based on reason which aim at discriminating between the self and not-self, between the eternal and non-eternal etc., Thus paving the way reason takes the aspirant to the analysis of the Mahāvākyas or the great sayings. The exercise of reason enables the aspirant to remove the impediments such as doubts etc., regarding the non-dual nature of the truth, the doubt that the non-dual truth may not be the whole truth (asambhāvana). It enables the aspirant in irradiating the deep rooted impressions of the nature of Reality other than the non-dual. Manana is a constant reflection on truth. Manana, a form of reasoning, has its function in convincing the aspirant that the teaching of Advaita alone is true. Thus the aspirant is not called upon to suspect reason and to take things on mere authority. On the other hand, he is called upon to exercise reason which is very essential both to understand the non-dual truth and to safeguard it against any possible attack and misuse. Every Advaitin

believes that there is an absolute need to make the non-dual truth acceptable to reason. Thus reason is not altogether banished from the system.

However Vācaspati is never tired of saying that reason has only an indirect, and never an independent role to play. Its role is only to explain and substantiate the scriptual truths. It has value only when it does not conflict with Śruti. It cannot be regarded as an alternative to Śruti. To quote his words: "Discrimination by reasoning, not in conflict with verbal testimony, and dependent thereon is called reflection. Reasoning is either presumption or inference." [12] In this sense Vācaspati subordinates reason to Śruti. It is only an aid to Śruti. It can justify Śruti but cannot replace or displace it. Vācaspati is of the decided opinion that the functions of Śruti and reason cannot be substituted for each other. His position with regard to the problem may be said thus: He neither underestimates (like the dogmatic religionist) nor overestimates reason (like the modern Rationalistic school, in the western thought). He gives reason its due. The Śruti is suprarational not in the sense that it is opposed to reason but in the sense that it transcends reason. That is to say, Advaita

does not insist upon abolishing reason from the system, but only to transcend the scissoring activity of Reason. Vācaspati fully admits the claims of reason as far as matters empirical are concerned. Its function is to judge the truth of relations in empirical presentations. And in his opinion the śrutis cannot be opposed to experience. He says that a thousand scriptures verily cannot convert a pot into a cloth.[13] But he reminds us of the shortcomings of reason as far as transcendental matters are concerned. Reason, as discursive thinking, works empirically knowledge through reason proceeds from relations to relations. It starts with doubts and ends in scepticism and despair. Hence it cannot remain undenied. It has got to be transcended in absolute and transcendental knowledge —— the Advaita Jñāna.

Thus, in the view of Vācaspati, reasoning independent of Śruti is quite useless. For, in that case there would be nothing left for reason to think about. If the logicians (tarkikas) quarrel among themselves as to the cause of the world, it is because of their titanic adherence to a dry reasoning (Śuskka tarka). Pure reason (Śushka tarka), in his opinion may succeed in inferring that there must be a cause to this world; but it cannot

Vācaspati points out, tell us whether this cause is sentient or non-sentient.[14] Moreover, knowledge based on mere reasoning, is inconclusive in that the conclusions based on mere reasoning often cross swords with one another as there is no limit to arguing. Further it is circuitous; it revolves in a circle and hence gets caught up in itself. Hence the necessity to transcend it in the wake of higher revelation of the truth.

5

Only purportful śruti is authoritative

Now the question that stares us in the face is: If Vācaspati is bent on emphasising the subordination of reason to scripture, will not his philosophy become inconsistent insofar as the true philosophic spirit demands an independent and original place for reason? The answer is 'No'. For Vācaspati does not claim that all scripture is authoritative. To him, only purportful scripture, is authoritative. But how to determine the purport of the scriptures? What yardstick is there to tell us that only such and such scriptural text is authoritative and not the other? In the opinion of Vācaspati, as for all advaitins, there are six marks or links that determine the purport of the scripture. They are: (i) the harmony of the initial and the concluding passages (upakrama and

upasaṁhāra); there should be Eka Vishaya (single topic) in the Upakrama and Upasaṁhāra, (ii) repetition (abhyāsa), (iii) Novelty (apūrvatva), (iv) fruitfulness (phala), (v) glorification by eulogistic passages or condemnation by deprecatory passages (arthavāda) and (vi) intelligibility in the light of reasoning (upapatti). These are the determining criteria of purportful scripture and in his opinion non-dualism (advaita) is the purport of all scripture.[15] According to him the meaning of the text is to be determined by the context and the primary sense must be preferred to the implied. The Vedic texts which have monistic import are strong and authoritative; the texts which are mere eulogies are not so. Vācaspati positively says that the mention of creation etc., by the scripture is not part of the primary intention.[16] Here it is to be noted that the application of reason is one of the marks of determining the purport of the scripture. It should also be noted that it is only through the exercise of reason that the first five marks of determining the purport of the scripture become intelligible. Reason has thus a vital role to play. Certainly the Śruti, does not underestimate the role of reason in it; to repeat it only warns us against over-estimating reason in view of its serious short comings.

6

Śruti (Scripture) and Pratyaksha (perception)

Now we are faced with a vital problem as to the relation between scripture as a pramāṇa and perception. How exactly are they related? Which is more fundamental? When there arises a conflict between these two, which is to be considered as of greater value? The problem of the relation between the two assumes greater significance in view of the fact that scripture and perception seem to be opposed to each other in that the latter apprehends a world of plurality and difference, whereas the purport of the former, according to Vācaspati, as for all Advaitins, is non-dualism.[17]

Vācaspati is of the view that in the context of conflict between scripture and perception, the former must be deemed to be more authoritative than the latter as the former being 'apaurusheya' (impersonal or non-authored) is absolutely free from all defects, doubts and suspicions and hence absolutely valid, whereas perception is liable to imperfection in that it depends upon the functioning of the sense organs of the individual which presuppose deceit, negligence, malobservation and the like. For instance, the illusion of two moons (dvichandra bhramah)

is because of the operation of physical and psychical defects and disorders. Perception may be taken as betraying us in this sense. Further, since scriptural validity is self-revealed by the very fact of its conveying knowledge, it is independent of any other means of knowledge in respect of its effect, viz., valid knowledge. In this sense scripture is to be regarded as of unquestionable authority. It produces knowledge without having anything body in its view. Its validity is self established (Svataḥ-siddha); it is its own criterion. Thus Vācaspati argues that in the context of conflict between scripture and perception, the former should be considered as having greater validity,[18] since it is independent in respect of knowledge it generates.[19]

The supporter of the superiority and priority of perception to scripture, is not prepared to agree with Vācaspati. He moves to make out a genuine case for perfection. He argues that perceptual knowledge invariably comes before knowledge through any other means such as inference and even scriptural knowledge. In this consists the priority (jeṣthatva) of perception. Perception or pratyaksha apprehends a world of difference and plurality. Hence perception being the first and basic source of knowledge (jeṣtha pramāṇa) cannot be rejected in favour of scripture, for to do so, is

to allow scripture, which is not a jestha pramāṇa, to override perception. Thus in his opinion, scriptural knowledge, as it is opposed to perception should be declared as invalid or figurative.[20]

Vācaspati proceeds to answer this legitimate question. He agrees with the opponent in saying that perception is the first means of knowledge (jestha - pramāṇa); but he does not accept the alleged claim of the opponent that it is basic and foundational, as it is liable to sublation by a later valid knowledge. In fact the later valid knowledge arises only by sublating what is first affirmed by pratyaksha, as for instance, nacre-silver illusion. No doubt the jestha pramāṇa i.e., pratyaksha, affirms nacre as silver in the first instance, but it is not valid, inasmuch as it gets sublated by nacre-cognition later. If the former were not sublated, the origination of the latter cognition, whose essence is the sublation of the former would not be intelligible. In support of his view Vācaspati quotes the authority of Pūrva Mimāmsa Sutra: "Where there is the relationship of earlier and later, the earlier is weaker, as in the case of the archetypal rite (Prakrti)".[21] Thus

what comes first (i.e., perception affirming difference and plurality) is not valid, as it gets sublated by Brahman-knowledge (ie., Śruti). Hence perception cannot be depended on. Only scripture affirming the oneness of all existence is valid. This is what is called 'apaccheda nyāya' or the principle of subsequent sublation. Thus the priority or what is not depended on (i.e., pratyaksha) is a ground for its being sublated, not for its being sublating another means of knowledge — argues Vācaspati.[22] Scripture in this sense, should certainly override perception and rightly so, maintains he.

Again, the advocate of superiority of perception over scripture may argue that scripture itself is dependent on perception and not vice versa inasmuch as if the words and their senses are not first perceived, scriptural knowledge would not result. In other words, the origination of scriptural knowledge requires the prior perception of words and their senses. Thus scripture is dependent on perception in respect of its origin (utpatti), though it is independent in respect of the knowledge it generates (pramitānapekshatvāt). Since scripture opposed to perception which affirms a world of difference and plurality, it should be declared as invalid or figurative — argues the

advocate of superiority of perception over scripture.[23]

Vācaspati answers this objection by saying that strictly speaking there is no opposition between perception and scripture as the latter does not annul the empirical validity of perception; as already noted, in the opinion of Vācaspati, even a thousand scriptures verily cannot convert a pot into a cloth.[23(a)] On the other hand it annuls the absolute validity of perception. That is to say, scripture does not say that what is revealed by perception is not true; it only says that it is not absolutely true.[24] The reality of plurality of existences which may be established on the basis of perception cannot in the view of Vācaspati be absolute, insofar as perception itself is only empirically valid. Brahman is the only absolute reality as declared by the Śrutis. Thus Vācaspati, from the absolute stand point of the Śrutis which declare the reality as non-dual, questions the veracity of the systems which advocate difference, and rejects them as self-contradictory and absurd.

Now, if the advocate of the superiority of perception argues, that the scriptural knowledge presupposes the prior perception of words, it is no argument — says Vācaspati,

for the words and their senses are but empirical and all that is required for the origination of scriptural knowledge, is the existence of the empirical words and their senses, not their absolute reality. For instance, the qualities of short and long, do not really belong to letters; rather they belong only to sound (dhvani). But as being superimposed on letters they cause true apprehension. What is caused by them is true, not delusive. Vācaspati cites two words — 'Naga' and 'Nāga' as a case in point. 'Naga' means tree whereas 'Nāga' means elephant. What results from this difference is valid for all practical purposes though the words themselves are superimposed forms of sounds. The sounds and their senses only manifest something which is already there (i.e., knowledge, which is eternal). This means that the words themselves presuppose the prior knowledge (scriputral) and that the words and their sounds are not coeval with scriptural knowledge (for knowledge according to Vedānta means that). In this sense, the words and senses have value not in themselves but only in manifesting knowledge. Thus the words have a functional value and it is futile to insist upon their absolute existence — argues Vācaspati.[25]

Thus, according to Vācaspati, perception has no value apart from the self-luminous self-manifesting consciousness (Śruti). It is vitally dependent on scripture which is the ultimate source of Brahman - knowledge. Śruit is thus the logical prius and pre-supposition of perception.

Vācaspati further argues that the scripture cannot be declared to be figurative as demanded by the advocate of the superiority of perception inasmuch as the purport of Śruti is repeatedly emphasised.[26] To strengthen his stand, Vācaspati quotes the authority of Śabara Swamin: "The meaning of a word in an injunctive statement, cannot be other than its primary one",[27] and also a verse from Tantra Vārtika: "The superiority of the later over the earlier is cognised, where their cognitions arise not as reciprocally dependent".[28]

Thus Brahman, the ultimate reality, which is non-dual cannot be simply dismissed on the ground that it is not vouchsafed by perception and other pramāṇas, since of the two, Śruti alone is foundational and powerful, the latter being weak and dependent, maintains Vācaspati. Here he endorses the view of Maṇḍana that the

authority of Śruti alone will hold good when there arises a conflict between Śruti and perception.[29] It is always from the knowledge of śruti that the validity of perception is to be judged and not vice versa. Śruti thus is the bed rock of all vedāntic reasoning. And it is the categorical view of Advaita vedānta, that Brahman, the ultimate reality can be realised only through Śruti and not through any other pramāṇas.

7

Does Perception really cognize difference?

Still the question may be asked: Does perception really cognize difference? Maṇḍana seeks to show that perception does not really cognize difference thereby setting at nought the alleged criticism that since there is conflict between perception and scripture and, since perception is the first means of knowledge, the scripture should be declared as invalid or figurative. According to Maṇḍana, there can be no conflict between perception and scripture, as the content of both is the same viz., non-dualism.

The main argument putforward by Maṇḍana to show that perception does not cognize difference, in a nutshell, is this: Perception does not cognize difference; on the

other hand, it apprehends an undifferentiated and indeterminate being unassociated with names and relations (nirviśesha sanmātra). It cognizes objects as mere existence (sattā). They are non-different from one another. Perception in this sense is always of the one real and hence there cannot be any conflict at all between perception and scripture, as scripture also has the same non-dual import.[30] But difference, says Maṇḍana, comes to be superimposed on it by later thought. The cognition of difference, in the opinion of Maṇḍana is an illusion due to avidyā.[31]

Thus Maṇḍana here makes a distinction between indeterminate perception (nirvikalpaka pratyaksha) and the determinate perception (savikalpaka pratyksha). If the former reveals the object as mere 'existence' (or being), devoid of all characteristics, the latter reveals the object with all its characteristics. Determinate cognition certainly does cognize difference but it is always preceded by indeterminate perception. In other words, difference is a relative notion as its cognition is dependent upon the knowledge of its substrate (ie., the undifferentiated and indeterminate being). Thus the conception of difference is not logically

intelligible and hence it is illusory. That is to say, difference cannot be regarded as the content of true perception. Hence perception, strictly speaking, does not cognize difference and thus it is not opposed to scripture. Needless to say, that the other pramāṇas fail to cognize difference, as they are all dependent on perception.

Vācaspati very closely follows this argument of Maṇḍana in refuting difference. At the outset, it should be pointed out that the dialectic on difference, as found in Bhāmatī,[32] is but a summarised form of Maṇḍana's arguments against difference, who appears to be the earliest thinker to refute difference. The other post-Shankarites like Citsukha, Sriharsha etc., have also refuted difference in their works.

Maṇḍana's arguments against difference may now be briefly outlined. Regarding the nature of difference Maṇḍana asks: What is difference? Is it the nature of a thing or is it an attribute of it?[33] He says that difference cannot be real as it can be neither of the nature of things nor an attribute of them. If difference were of the nature (Svarūpa) of the thing — this is the Bauddha's and the Prābhākara's view of difference —

there would be no things to be different. The illusion of shell-silver, for instance, then would not arise. Further in that case, the object and the so called difference would become synonymous and the empirical statement like the 'pot is different' will reduce itself to a tautology, (viz. 'pot is pot'). Thus difference cannot be regarded as the very nature of things, for if the difference from say, the cloth is the very nature of, the jug, then the cloth itself is to be taken as involved in the nature of the jug, so that there can be only jug and not cloth. To accept this is to accept non-dualism and hence difference falls through. Thus if difference be of the nature of things, it abolishes itself.

Citsukha also offers a similar argument. He says that if difference is of the nature of an object, there should exist a correlate from which the object is to be differentiated. But as it is accepted by the advocate of difference that it is one with the object differentiated (i.e., the correlate) there would be no correlate which means non-duality.[34]

Nor can difference in the view of Maṇḍana, be said to be an attribute — this is the Naiyāyika and the

Bhatta view of difference — for if it were an attribute it may be asked: Is this attribute different from the substrate or not? If it were not different, then the attribute and the substrate would become identical and this argument would simply fall in line with the first alternative discussed above. If the attribute is different from the substance, then we will be left with three units: (i) the substrate (ii) the attribute and (iii) the difference of the attribute from the substrate. Now we are compleiled to ask: how exactly is this difference related to the substrate on the one hand, and to the attribute on the other? To answer this question, we are forced to presuppose a second difference. Again it may be asked: What is the nature of second difference? Is it different from the elements it differentiates? The answer to this question lands itself in infinite regress. The final outcome of this discussion is that the notion of difference is itself unintelligible.[35] Difference is thus unreal, fictitious and non-existent.

In essence Vācaspati seems to take these arguments of Maṇḍana for granted and proceeds to refute difference on that basis. As long as difference is not thrown overboard in toto, so long Vācaspati cannot build his mansion of

non-dualism. Hence his defence of non-dualism begins with the refutation of the notion of difference. He argues that our knowledge of difference, is invariably bound up with that of the differents. This means to say that the cognition of differents, presupposes the prior knowledge of the differents as differents. That is, to talk of difference between two things, is to presuppose the existence of two things. Thus there is the defect of reciprocal dependence. Vācaspati points out, in unmistakable language, that the concept of difference is unintelligible and hence logically untenable. It is but an apperance and not a reality.[36]

8

Refutation of Bhedābheda

Now Vācaspati takes up the task of refuting difference-cum-non-difference (Bhedābhedha) which seems to have the solid support of common sense and experience. Experience actually teaches us, argues the bhedābhedavādin, that there is a synthesis of the so called difference and non-difference. Why not then we regard both identity and difference as real? Why not we accept both to be equally true and valid? In other-words reality according to this view, should be said to be both different and non-different as for instance bracelets etc., which are non-different in respect of their nature as gold and different in respect of

their nature as bracelets, earrings, crowns etc., That is, according to the bhedābhedavādin, difference and non-difference, though opposed to each other, nevertheless inhere in one; it cannot be said that there cannot be the inherence of the two in one as life is full of instances of differen- which bear a witness to the synthesis of difference and non-difference.[37] Though Vācaspati never mentions the bhedabheda vadin by name, Amalananda, Vacaspati's commentator, opines that it is Bhāskara's bhedābhedavāda that is criticised and refuted by Vācaspati.

Vācaspati, after having carefully considered Bhedābheda, criticises it with unswerving vigour in his Bhāmatī. Bhedābheda, when subjected to critical examination is found to involve self-contradictions. He lays bare the difficulties involved in such a notion. He asks: what then is this which is called difference that should exist along with non-difference in one place? If it be said to be reciprocal non-existence, does this feature exist or not, between bracelet and gold? If not, there is oneness alone, and not difference. If it does exist there is difference alone, but not non-difference. Vācaspati, says that their co-existence is impossible as there is opposition between existence and non-existence. If the bhedābhedavādin argues

that co-existence is possible, then there would result non-difference as such between the bracelet and say earning, as they are non-different in respect of their cause viz., gold, But are they really non-different? Vācaspati says that they cannot be, for in that case, he who wants an ear-ring must be satisfied with the bracelet. If all things were non-different there would be no distinctions like 'This is here, not that' etc.,

Now to come out of this difficulty and to establish his own stand point, the Bhedābheda vādin may argue that the earring is non-different, only as gold; not as bracelet; bracelet is certainly different from earring. This, interpretation fares no better, for in reply Vācaspati asks: if the bracelet is non-different from gold, how is it that gold does not recur in earring etc.,? And if it does not recur, how is the bracelet non-different from gold? If there is difference, too, between earring and bracelet, then there must be difference between bracelet and gold also, since earring and gold are non-different. And admitting the difference between the earring and bracelet for the present, it may be said, he who wants the first does not want the second. When gold is apprehended from a distance earring etc., is not apprehended. How then can we account for the apposition 'earring is gold'? Vācaspati says that these two

(i.e., the earring and gold) are not intelligible, if there be non-difference-cum-difference. Therefore Vācaspati asserts that one of the two (i.e., difference and non-difference) has to be abandoned. He argues that "it is on the basis of non-difference that there is the positing of difference; the reverse is not true, for difference is dependent on what is differentiated; those which are differentiated are each one by itself; if there were not one (each), there could be no difference because there would be no locus."[38] Non-difference, on the other hand, cannot be shown to be dependent on difference for its existence, for, the apprehension of difference in the form "not this but this" has need of the apprehension of the counter-correlate, while the apprehension of non-difference has no need of anything else. Vācaspati concludes: for these reasons, it is admissible that only on the basis of non-difference, is there the positing of indeterminable difference.[39] He strengthens his argument by quoting the authority of the Chandogya text: "only as clay, is this true".

Thus, though our experience is a standing witness to the synthesis of difference and non-difference, difference-cum-non-difference is a logical absurdity as it affirms and denies the same truth in the same breath; and hence it is uncritical, to accept both of them as real — points out

Vācaspati. The relevant question should be of these two, difference and non-difference, which is more fundamental? In the view of Vācaspati, as for all Advaitins, only non-difference is fundamental and foundational, and difference is relative, inasmuch as difference, as already shown, is a dependent entity, This is Vācaspati's refutation of difference as well as difference-cum-non-difference.

Thus Vācaspati, by refuting difference, difference cum-nondifference, focusses his attention on the essential teaching of Advaita, viz., the identity of the self and Brahman, the supreme reality. He is never tired of pointing out that if difference is noticed at all, it is because of avidyā or superimposition.

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CHAPTER - IV

THE DOCTRINE OF NIRGUNA BRAHMAN

1

The conception of Nirguna Brahman is the most distinguishing feature of Advaita Vedānta. Vācaspati's exposition of the main thesis of Advaita centres round these points: (i) that Brahman is the true essence of the individual self (jīva), (ii) that Brahman or Absolute is devoid of any qualities and distinctions whatsoever; that it is pure consciousness and does not undergo any change on account of creation; that Brahman in its true nature is acosmic (nisprapancha) and hence cannot be defined, in positive terms.

To elaborate these points: According to Vācaspati, the ultimate reality which may be termed either Brahman or Ātman is one and only one. It is independent, pure and devoid of all determinations. It is pure as it is immaterial bodyless and free from pain. It is eternal, as it has no cause of destruction. It is undecaying. It is immutable as it is devoid of modifications of properties of characterstics and of all states.[1] And because it is eternal it cannot have activity. Further activity, according to him cannot be regarded as an attribute of Brahman insofar as action makes it mutable; action is the cause of a modification in its substrate - with the consequence that Brahman becomes non-

eternal. As Vācaspati says: "If action subsists in another entity, the action cannot produce an aid in Brahman, for instance rubbing a mirror cannot make a gem pure"[2].

Thus Vācaspati objects to the view that Brahman undergoes modification (pariṇāma). He asks: If Brahman changes, does it change as a whole or in part? If it changes as a whole, how can there be no destruction of its nature? If it changes in part, is the part different from the whole or non-different? If it is different there cannot be transformation of the original reality, for when one thing is changed, a different thing is also not changed as that would mean an undue extension.[3] If it be non-different then the transformation must be of the whole. If this is admitted, then Brahman becomes non-eternal as it would change with the admission of transformation, vanishing completely at the end. But Brahman is transcendental. It is unchanging permanent and beyond the category of time. Thus pariṇāma in the case of Brahman is not possible.[3(a)] It does not become anything. Then the question of its becoming finite or unreal or other than real or becoming many, does not arise at all. Only a

thing which is made out of parts can become something. Since Brahman is akhanda (partless), it cannot strictly become anything. So also it should be said that nothing comes out of Brahman as it is a homogeneous mass. Moreover production involves change. But Brahman in its essence is beyond all change and mutability. It is the witness of all manifes modifications. So it cannot be said that Brahman becomes Iswara, world or Jiva but only appears as such due to avidyā, as if it has become the world, Jiva etc.,[4] Jiva is not the modification (vikāra) of Brahman; nor is it different from Brahman. It is the same Brahman with indescribable adjuncts.[4(a)] Further as Brahman is infinite, it is unsound to argue for any extension of Brahman. Thus there can be no further extension to the infinite as no boundary line exists in the infinite. And as Brahman is infinite, it must be one and only one, for there cannot be two infinites, since in that case one would limit the other. It is absolutely self-identical. Vācaspati concludes that Brahman is devoid of all kinds of differences and is known only through the Śruti. And contemplation cannot occur in the case of Brahman as contemplation depends on the establishment of difference of the contemplated, the contemplation and the contemplator etc.[5]

Thus Vācaspati states, that the Śruti speaks of only the attributeless (nirguṇa Brahman) when it says: Brahman is without sound, touch, colour and is infinite. The transcendental Brahman is devoid of all determinations.[6] It is eternally free from bondage. When a jīva is liberated it realises its own purity which is nothing but Brahman. In its essence, it is devoid of birth, oldage and death. But it appears to be bound because of avidyā.[7] Thus Vācaspati asserts that Atman or Brahman is the only ontological reality of all phenomenal appearances. The appearance of the world and empirical selves are due to the beginningless nescience.[8] Brahman is self-luminous light of consciousness. It shines by itself and seeks no outside light to illumine it. Infact there is no other light other than itself. It is devoid of all limiting adjuncts.[9] It is the Sākshin of its own limited form, the Jīva.[10]

2

Brahman is avedya

Further, in the view of Vācaspati, Brahman, the ultimate reality is unknown and unknowable. It is unknowable as it is pure existence; and pure existence does not admit

of a second principle to know it. It is self-luminous and self-validating consciousness and is unknown as an object of any knowledge. For to know Brahman is to delimit Brahman. Vācaspati is very emphatic in saying that there cannot be any sort of mental modification in respect of pure Brahman as it is self-luminous and hence requires no such modification for its revelation.[11] It cannot be held that it is either an object to itself or to a second principle of consciousness or even as an act of consciousness, as all these go against the essential nature of Brahman which is simply pure consciousness (Śuddha Caitanya). It is knowledge itself. Thus knowability may be taken to be the exact opposite of self-luminosity of Brahman.

However to say that Brahman is unknown and unknowable does not mean asserts Vācaspati, that it ends up in agnosticism. For though Brahman cannot be known as an object of knowledge, it can be known in a secondary sense, by the intuitive knowledge produced by the vedic testimony, manifested by a mode of internal organ which destroys avidyā and its effect — argues Vācaspati.[11(a)] I.e., it is only the Brahman as associated with mental modification that is knowable. Thus Brahman is knowable in a secondary sense.

The view that it is only Brahman as associated with mental modification (upahita Brahma), that is the object of consciousness is not free from difficulties. The difficulty is this. If Brahman as associated with a mental state be the object of consciousness, this knowledge obviously cannot remove our ignorance of Brahman, inasmuch as this ignorance will have, likewise for its object, upahita Brahma or Brahman as associated with nescience. If so, the object of nescience, it should be said, is different from that of the corresponding knowledge.

However, in the view of Amalānanda, Vācaspati's commentator, this is no difficulty at all. He removes the difficulty by drawing a distinction between limitation (viseshanatva or avacchinnatva) and association (upahitattva). The difference between an 'upadhi' and a 'Viśeshana' is this: Upadhi or adjunct is that which never enters into the being of the object; it only differentiates it from others. But an avacchedaka or viśeshana on the other hand, enters into the very being of an object of which it is an avacchedaka and distinguishes the object from others.[12] Thus according to Vācaspati, whenever Brahman is known by a vṛtti, it is only upahita Brahman and never pure Brahman.

But Prakāshātman is of the view that pure Brahman, can be an object of mental modification. He argues th t pure Brahman should be affirmed as an object of mental modification in order that nescience which is in Brahman is to be negated.[13]

3

Brahman is acosmic

Further according to Vācaspati Brahman, the ultimate reality is acosmic (nisprapancha), as nothing, not even cosmic explanation can exhaust it. For to exhaust it is to limit it; but it being infinite (anantha), can never be limited lest it should cease to be infinite. It transcends the categories of the desirables and the undesirables.[14] It cannot be defined in terms of categories, for there is nothing beside it. Explanation and description, strictly speaking do not apply to Brahman as these presuppose something other than Brahman in terms of which, Brahman may be described. But according to Advaita, there is nothing other than Brahman. It is non-relational. It is free from all internal and external relations. It has no internal relation differences. It has no internal variety ('svagata bheda'). One can think of the relational, only with reference to a second thing.

But according to Advaita there is no second to Brahman. It is Ekamevaadviteeya (one without a second).[15] It is 'asparsha' to put it in the words of Gaudapāda. It is unaffected (asanga) and aloof (kevala). There is nothing other than it with which it may be related and in terms of which it may be defined. Further whatever is experienced is limited, impure, non-intelligent and destructible. Being of the nature of purity, intelligence etc., the nature of Brahman cannot be defined by the knowledge of these. No human expression of it can be affirmed. It can rather inadequately be described, not in positive terms but only in terms of what it is not. That is to say positive definition of Brahman is impossible; only a negative definition 'not this', 'not this', (neti, neti), which again is inadequate may be attempted. Yet Brahman should not on that account be simply taken to be merely negative, as it is the positive ground of all negations.

It is beyond thought and words. The upanisad[16] says that the speech and the mind return without reaching Brahman. It is non-conceptual. It cannot be described as one in relation to many, not a whole in relation to parts, not a substance in relation to attributes; nor is it a cause in relation to effects . It cannot be said

that it is this or that; that it is here and there now and then. "It (Brahman) is not gross, not subtle, not short not long, not red, not adhesive, without shadow without darkness; without air, without space, unattached, without taste, without smell, without sight .... and without either inside or outside"[17] __ as the Brihadaranyaka puts it. Again in the candid words of Māndūkya upanishad[18] "....... It is unseen, unrelated, inconceivable, un-inferable, unimaginable, indescribable ....."

All this may be summed up as under: It is nirviśesha, (featureless) nirvishayaka (objectless), nirguṇa (attributeless), niravayava (partless) Niś-prapancha (acosmic), nirākāra (formless), Niranjana (spotless), nitya (eternal), nirhetuka (causeless), nishkriya (non-active), anantha (infinite) amala (pure),[18] aja (unborn), amrta (deathless), akshara (indestructible), achala (immovable), apariṇāmi (non-transformable) or Kūtastha nitya (immutably eternal), asparsha or asanga (non-relational), abhaya (fearless), akartṛ (nondoer), ajnatṛ (non-knower), abhoktṛ (nonenjoyer). It is really indeterminate, uniform, homogeneous consciousness and existence.[19]

4

Brahman is not Śunya

Now, if such is the nature of acosmic Brahman, is it in any way different from the Śunyam (void) of the Buddhists? It is here that Vācaspati takes pains to make it clear that, the failure of discursive thought to exhaust the acosmic Brahman, does not imply the nonexistence of Brahman or that the reality is Śunya. He warns us against equating the ultimate reality with mere blankness or empty nothing; for, to do so is to go against the basic everyday experience of the existence of one's own self.[20] Thus the existence of one's own self is indubitable, as doubt implies, the doubter who is none other than Brahman. Thus in the very act of doubting, one asserts one's own existence. It is one without a second, transcendent changeless, untainted, eternally free (Śuddha-buddha mukta svabhāva).[21] It is timelessly and spacelessly present. It is 'trikālābādhita satya' which never gets contradicted at any time.[22] It is 'Ekātma pratyaya sāra' as Māndūkya puts it.

The Advaitin's conception of reality and Infinite may be further analysed. His position simply amounts to this: It is the infinite and hence the independent, in the strict sense of the term, that can be called 'Real' and vice versa.

This means that we are strained to talk of more than one 'Real' or 'independent reals' as that would go against the absoluteness of the absolute.[23] Hence nothing other than Brahman could be call 'Real'. In other words, the absoluteness of Brahman prevents us from calling Jagat, jīva Iśwara etc., as 'Real'. It may be mentioned here that those systems which regard Jagat and jīva as real in addition to Brahman, strictly speaking, cut at the very root of the logic of their systems. To put it in different words, if Advaita Vedānta maintains the non-compromising Absolutism, the other systems simply dilute the Absolute (Brahman), by pronouncing that the jīva and the world are also 'Real'. Here we should say that either the "Absolute" of those systems (Dvaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita and other pluralistic systems) is not really, Absolute or that the jīva and the world are not 'Real'. If the former stand point is accepted, those systems virtually collapse. If, on the other hand, the latter is admitted, then they will have to shake hands, though most unwillingly, with the advaitin. In short, logically speaking, there can be only one 'Real' that is 'true', and that is the Absolute or Brahman of Advaita. This is a clear instance of the logical strictness and precision of Advaita Vedānta.

Further when the reality is asserted as 'Eka', Vācaspati takes pains to clarify that it is not the arithmetical one as against two or many. It only suggests that the reality is not two or many or that it is not duality or plurality. In the Ārambhaṇādhikaraṇa[23(a)] he clearly says that the advaitin negates only bheda or difference and not that he dogmatically characterises the reality as monistic.

8

Svarūpa and Taṭastha lakshaṇas of Brahman

In the foregoing pages it was seen that according to Vācaspati, as for any Advaitin, Brahman in its essence is essentially indeterminable and indefinable, as it transcends all human determinations and definitions of it. However, Vācaspati asserts that the idea of Nirguṇa Brahman may be formed. It is 'Existence (sat), knowledge (cit) and bliss (ānanda).' This kind of expression having an idea of Brahman may be described as the svarūpa lakshaṇa of Brahman or Brahman per se. This indicates that knowledge existence and bliss are not the qualities of Brahman as it is nirguṇa. On the other hand they constitute the very essence of Brahman. These only point out that Brahman is not non-existence (asat), not unconsciousness (jaḍa) and not of the nature of misery (duḥkha). Existence, knowledge

and bliss are not the three different qualities of Brahman. They constitute its essence. All these three are really one. In Brahman, existence is consciousness and consciousness is existence; consciousness is bliss and bliss is consciousness.[23(b)] Amalānanda opines that knowledge and bliss devoid of existence are void, existence devoid of knowledge is not manifested in consciousness and since the witness (sākshin), of the nature of existence and knowledge being an object of supreme love, is of the nature of bliss. He argues that the difference between existence and knowledge and the difference between knowledge and bliss are due to limiting adjuncts, just as plurality in being is due to limiting adjuncts.[24]

There is another way of forming an idea of Brahman which may be termed the tatastha lakshaṇa of Brahman or Brahman per accidens. For instance, when Brahman is understood as 'the cause of the origination sustenance and destruction of the universe,[25] we are supposed to have given the tatastha lakshaṇa' of Brahman. This kind of understanding Brahman makes it relational though in its essence it is non-relational. It is called 'tatastha' as it enables one to understand Brahman from a relative point of view (i.e., the world). Yet the characteristics of the world are in no way related with Brahman. The world is insentient and ever-changing, but

Brahman is real, sentient and changeless.[25(a)] Here we understand Brahman as the cause of the world, as its maintainer, destroyer the moral governor of the empirical selves and the lord of the Law of Karma. These, strictly speaking, do not really characterise its essential nature, but are relative to Brahman. Thus causality of Brahman is not its essential nature, but accidental one (agantuka). It is distinct from its essential nature. Yet it serves as an indication or mark of Brahman.

Vācaspati states the essential and accidental characteristics of Brahman in the first and second opening verses of his Bhāmatī. He specifically states the essential nature of Brahman in the fourth pada of the opening verse[26] and the relative nature in the first three padas of the first verse[27] and again in the second verse.[28] In the first three pādās of the first verse, Vācaspati defines Brahman as Lord, with the two kinds of indeterminable nescience. With these two kinds of indeterminable Nescience, he effects the illusory manifestations of ether, air, fire, water and earth. From this comes forth the universe movable and immovable, high and low. In the second verse, he further says that the vedas are His (Brahman's) breath, the five great elements are His glance; the movable and the immovable universe is His smile; His sleep is the final deluge (Mahāpralaya)

This view is cosmic and all-inclusive. And according to Vācaspati, as for all Advaitins, it is not the clearest explanation of the truth, the highest expression being acosmic and all-exclusive which consists in negating all attributes.[29]

Thus Vācaspati elaborates the two definitions of Brahman viz. tatastha and svarūpa. These respectively indicate the accidental and the essential nature of Brahman, as being full of, and free from, all characteristics. In short, the qualified Brahman is known as saguṇa Brahman or Iśvara and the unqualified Brahman as nirguṇa Brahman.

6

Saguṇa Brahman is Avidyākalpita

Now a question may be asked as to, whether nirguṇa Brahman changes into Saguṇa Brahman. 'No' says Vācaspati, for Brahman being devoid of all change, the question of its changing into something does not arise at all.[30] However when we view nirguṇa Brahman through our intellect it appears, says Vācaspati, as saguṇa Brahman. Thus the consciousness of saguṇa Brahman is due to the working of our intellect which works through division. In other words, it is due to the adjunct avidyā.[31] He says that eternity, purity, consciousness and freedom are the essential form of Brahman, not due to limiting adjuncts.[32] But omniscience and omnipotence are the

adventitious forms of Brahman due to avidyā. The determining qualities are due to the limiting adjuncts and are superimposed on Brahman.[33] Thus the formless Brahman attains the form of Iśwara or personal God with abundant qualities and attributes. Vācaspati says that the determinate form of Iśwara is superimposed on Brahman because of the limiting adjuncts, for the purposes of meditation and prayer.[34] Amalānanda says, that all people cannot understand the doctrine of Nirguṇa Brahman. For people who want something concrete there is saguṇa Brahman.[34(a)] Iśvara's omniscience and omnipotence is due to beginningless avidyā.[35] He is the source of the vedas. He is Brahman limited by avidyā. He is omniscient and omnipotent. He is the creator of the world which is indeterminable.[36] But in the ultimate sense, as already pointed out, Nirguṇa Brahman alone, in the view of Vācaspati, is real and the so called saguṇa Brahman is but an appearance of Nirguṇa Brahman.[37]

Thus Vācaspati, endorses Shankara's postulation of saguṇa Brahman or Iśwara, to serve a practical purpose. It acts as a symbol for meditation (upāsana). Vācaspati, thus does not underestimate the value of saguṇa Brahman or Iswara. It is of supreme importance through not the final reality. Nor does he compromise Nirguṇa Brahman. He is an out and out Absolutist.

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CHAPTER - V

THE NATURE OF THE INDIVIDUAL SELF (JĪVA)

1

Now we are confronted with the question as to what the jīvatman (individual self) is. In the view of Vācaspati, the jīvatman, in its essence, is not the very ego, as the Viśiṣṭādvaitins and the Dvaitins maintain; it is simply a product of illusion. In its essence the the jīvatman is not 'aham-padārtha' (the object of I-notion) It is Brahman itself. The theory that the empirical self, in its essence, is one with Brahman, forms the pivot on which the metaphysical system of Vācaspati rotates.

The concept of 'I' or ego, according to Vācaspati, does not pinpoint to the true nature of ātman inasmuch as the all-pervading and infinite ātman cannot be equated with the limited concept 'I'. Ordinarily we say: "Here I am staying at home" Just as the real nature and height of the trees, which are on the top of a hill, come to be underestimated and undermeasured as blades of grass if viewed from bottom, so also, in the I-notion, says Vācaspati, the real nature of ātman comes to be underestimated as the all pervading ātman cannot be limited to the finite I.[1]

What Vācaspati contends to the core is that the notion 'I' (aham-padārtha) is not the true self, but an

aggregate of self and not self. It is not true self, because, true self is eternal and what is eternal should persist in all the three times — past, present and future. But the notion 'I' does not satisfy this condition for it disappears in the state of liberation. If it were present in the sate of release, it would follow that even in that state there is ignorance (as 'I' is viewed here as a product of ignorance) which is absurd. In Saṁsāra however, the notion 'I' is found to be coterminous with nescience and conversely whenever there is I-notion there is avidyā. The I-notion Vācaspati argues, is therefore a product of illusion and as such it cannot be regarded as the true self. Thus, Vācaspati concludes that I-hood is naive and erroneous. It may be, at its best an empirical reality, but at its worst, it is error and confusion.

Thus jīva in its essence is not the individual ego as is ordinarily understood. Philosophically speaking it is none other than Brahman. This is what Vācaspati sought to prove and establish.

2

Jīvatva is due to adhyāsa

Now, if jīva according to Vācaspati, is none other than Brahman in its essence, what really explains

its 'jivahood'? It is here that Vācaspati brings in the concept of adhyāsa or superimposition as already put forward and explained by Shankara in his celebrated commentary on the Brahmasūtras of Bādarāyana, in its minute details. In fact Vācaspati's introduction to adhyāsa bhāshya of Shankara is a model of its kind. And by adhyāsa, Vācaspati means attributing to the real, of that which is unreal and vice versa. It means mistaking the real for the unreal and vice versa. Due to adhyāsa the intelligent self appears in the concept 'I' as agent and enjoyer.[2] The denotation of the concepting 'I' (aham-pratyaya), is superimposed on the inner self, which, on account of the intelligence and indifference etc., is the witness of the internal organ (antaḥkaraṇa). The attributes of the internal organ like desire, resolve, doubt, determination etc., are superimposed on the inner-self, that is the witness of the entire activities of the internal organ. Reversely, too one superimposes that inner-self over the internal organ etc., Thus are explained agency, knowership, enjoyership etc., The body, the organs, etc., cannot be act and enjoy without the aid of intelligence or Chaitanya. So the self whose nature is intelligence, linked with the body and the organs, acquires the capacity

to act and enjoy. It is these adjuncts that make for the differences among souls. Though the ātman is manifest yet by intermixture with objects like the intellect etc., somehow becomes the concept 'I', the subject of 'Iness — points out he. It is variously named as jīva, creature (jantu) or the knower of the field (kshetrajña).[3] But the jīva indeed is not different from this intelligent self.[4] Vācaspati here quotes the scripture 'anena jīvena'.[5] Thus, in the view of Vacaspati the aggregate of body etc., appears as the real ātman due to mutual superimposition (itaretara adhyāsa).

Again, it is because of the mutual superimposition of the qualities of the not-self and the self that the true self comes to be viewed as the jīva or the individual self. For instance the qualities of not-self like temporality etc., may be superimposed on the self, and the qualities of the self like eternity etc., inturn are, superimposed on the not self. Thus the self, even though eternal appears to be non-eternal, conscious appears to be unconscious, and permanent appears to be impermanent, because of the mutual superimposition of the qualities (dharmas) of the self and the notself. That is how the true self comes to be viewed as the individual self (jīva), points out Vacaspati.

The inner or true self is manifest, It is not an object and it is without parts. It is not really defined by the defining conditions posited by indeterminable beginningless nescience such as the, intellect the mind, gross and subtle bodies and the organs but appears as if defined — says Vācaspati. The jīva, in its essence, is not at all different from Brahman but appears to be different.[6] He is not an enjoyer, not an agent and not an object, but appears as if an agent, enjoyer and as the object of the concept 'I'. It is like ether. Ether appears as different and possessing diverse attributes because of difference defined by adjuncts such as pot, basin,[7] etc.,

Ātman, says Vācaspati, is never bound. He is ever liberated. Buddhi etc., being inert are also never bound. It is jīva, which is nothing but atman itself, imagined by beginningless avidyā that gets bound and liberated.[8] Vācaspati is never tired of saying that aham-padārtha is not at all the true self as the true self, the one inner self unconnected with the universe, is a mass of intelligence and bliss and is free from agency and enjoyership.[9] The self is of the essence of intelligence. There is not anything non-apprehended when the element of intelligence is apprehended.[10] Bliss eternity, pervasiveness etc., are not really different from nature of intelligence.[11] Whereas ahampadārtha or I-notion is

characterised by agency, enjoyership misery, grief and delusion.[12]

Jīva, in its essence, is non-different from the intelligent self.[12(a)] It is the jīva himself that, when free from adjuncts, is said to be Brahman whose nature is purity, intelligence etc.[13] Thus the identity of the jīva and the supreme self is absolute yet its conditioned form is the jīva.[14] As selfmanifest it is not an object. Yet it is an object in the conditioned form. Jīva, says Vācaspati, is the result of the apparent conditioning of Brahman by beginningless indeterminate nescience otherwise called the knower of the field (kshetrajna).[15] The difference of the self from the intellect etc., is says Vācaspati, indeterminable. Intellect etc., being indeterminable their difference from the self too is indeterminable.[16]

Thus, it is for the intelligent self itself which is self manifest and undefined, there is the condition of the jīva. Through non-apprehension of the difference from the defined intellect[17] etc., and the consequent superimposition of these conditions, the intelligent self comes to have the condition of jīva. In short, when the supreme self gets utterly identified with body, mind, intellect etc.,

it appears to have become the limited ego. It may be called the perceiving - feeling - thinking entity. This ego, through its own illusoriness, misconceives the self as finite and sorrow-ridden. Brahman, in reality is devoid of grief, misery etc., But due to nescience, Vācaspati clearly points out, it appears to have attained the state of the Jīva through superimposition. Vācaspati explicitly says that superimposition is due to nescience[18] when the true knowledge dawns, the misconceptions end. The jīva then rediscovers itself to be the infinite Brahman.

3

Defence of Adhyāsa

Now it may be objected that there cannot be the superimposition of the self on the not-self, for that which is unreal cannot be the substratum of superimposition. Vācaspati answers this objection by saying that the body etc (not-self) is neither real nor unreal, nor yet real and unreal, this being self-contradictory. It is, on the other hand inexplicable (anirvachaneeya)[19]

Alternatively, a strong objection may be raised against the very feasibility of adhyāsa. It may be said that the object to be superimposed must have a real being

some-where. For instance, in the case of the superimposition of the snake on the rope, the superimposition of the object (snake) is possible because it has a real existence in the jungle.

Vācaspati rejects this objection as it is inadequate and defective. The objection does not hold water, argues Vācaspati for, for superimposition to take place, the object to be superimposed need not have a real being (independent existence) elsewhere. Cognition of object (prateeti) alone is sufficient for its superimposition. It is enough if it exissts somewhere and even that prior existence is itself a case of superimposition. Thus the object superimposed presupposes a series of beginningless false existences of itself. In short the super imposition does not presuppose the real existence of the objects superimposed.[20]

Again, the very possibility of superimposition may be objected on the ground that the non-self cannot be superimposed on the self, since the self is always manifest and is without generality or specific qualities and similarities etc., which is one of the conditions for the possibility of superimposition. There can be no superimposition both when there is complete manifestation and complete non-manifestation.

Vācaspati answers this objection by simply endorsing the view of Shankara that it is due to lack of discrimination

(itaretara aviveka mithyā jnāna nimittah). Because of non-apprehension of difference through, the act of coupling the true with the untrue, there occurs adhyāsa. Therefore non-descrimination is the cause of illussory cognition — says Vācaspati.[21]

Again, superimposition may be objected on the ground that the self is a non-object as it is not other dependent for its manifestation and being without parts. It cannot therefore be an object of Cognition. Superimposition, that does not stand to reason.[22]

Vācaspati again, answers this objection by endorsing the view of Shankara, that non-objectness of the self, is not invariable. It is true he points out, that if the intelligent self were not an object, then indeed, there could be no superimposition thereon; but it is not invariably a non-object as it is the object of the concept 'I'. That is to say though the inner self, being self-manifest, is not an object and is without parts, yet having attained to the state of jīva, appears as the object of the concept 'I' due to indeterminable beginningless nescience such as the intellect, the mind, subtle and gross bodies and the organs etc., Thus it is for the intelligent self which is self-manifest and undefined, Vacaspati points out, that there is the condition of the jīva, through non-apprehension of

the difference from the defined intellect etc., and the consequent superimposition of these.[23]

Again, there is another serious problem. If it is accepted that there is mutual superimposition between the self and the not-self, i.e., when the existence of both the self and the not-self is admitted, is not non-dualism going to be jeopardised?

Vācaspati does not take this as posing a serious challenge to the Advaitic stand. He vehemently defends the Advaitic stand-point by saying that for adhyāsa to take place, it is enough if there is just the knowledge of the superimposed, not necessarily the very positive existence of the 'superimposed' In other words the superimposed (not-self) need not be transcendentally real. It is just anirvachaneeya (inexplicable).[24]

Furthermore, superimposition is objected to, on the ground of reciprocal dependence (anyanyāshraya) which is a defect (dosha). That is to say, the self becomes an object only if there is superimpsotion and there can be superimposition only when the self becomes an object.

Again what does not appear cannot be superimposed. But the fact is, anything appears only after

superimposition.

This contention, Vācaspati points out, is absurd, as it is not a defect. It admits of a perfectly natural explanation. The chain of auxiliary factors is a fact and so is beyond the grip of logic. Their appearance goes on and ad infinitum, but this is a case of beginningless adhyāsa. This unbroken continuity is a fact and logic cannot overlook it. The logician may strive hard to find a beginning for adhyāsa, but invain. The beginninglessness of adhyāsa process must ve accepted as a fact — contends Vācaspati.

Thus Vācaspati patiently replies to the above objection by saying that the appearance of jīva is due to a previous false confusion. So each false confusion has for its cause a previous false confusion and that another false confusion and so on in a beginningless series. It is only through such a beginningless series of confusions that all the later states of confusion are to be explained. Avidyā, according to Vācaspati operates, on the one hand in the individual self (jīva) as its locus or support (āshraya) and on the other, it has Brahman or pure self-revealing consciouness as its object (vishaya)* Avidya obscures the Vishaya and through it, makes false

* On the problem of the locus of avidya vide Chapter VI

appearances to be expressed thereby giving them a false semblance of Reality.

Thus, illusion in Vācaspati's view, is a psychological one for which the jīva is responsible and it is caused, as already said, through a beginningless chain of illusions or confusions, where each succeeding illusory experience is explained by a previous illusory mode of experience and that by another and so on. As soon as Brahman is realised the appearances vanish, for the root of all appearences is their illusory confusion with reality viz. the Brahman.

Vācaspati thus goes back to the old analogy of the beginningless process of the dependence of seed and sprout and points out that there is no inconsistency in every subsequent superimposition having for its object that which has been made the content of each earlier superimposition and its impressions.[25] Whenever Vācaspati is faced and charged with the defect of reciprocal dependence, he repeatedly resorts to 'Bijānkura'nyāya' throughout his Bhāmatī. 'Bijānkura nyāya', so to say, is his sweeping epithet.

Further, Vācaspati says that superimposition is something natural that evades itself to be rationally

understood. It is so natural for the self and the not-self to have mutual superimposition. Here Vācaspati appeals, as the, great Shankara does, to look into one's experiences without roaring and blatantly complexing the whole issue. Vācaspati, here completely accepts and endroses the view of Shankara that adhyasa is natural and is empirical (naisargikoyam lokavyavahārah).

Thus Vācaspati clearly bringsout the distinction between the self and the egoism (ahankāra) and maintains that 'I' is not the true-self as is contended by the Dvaitins and the Viśiṣtadvaitins. In his view, I-notion is spurious, born out of ignorance, whereas the pure self (ātman) is the fullest existence.

4

Jīva, in its essence, is no doer, no knower and no enjoyer

In the view of Vācaspati, the self cannot be regarded either as the doer or knower or enjoyer, because at bottom, it is indifferent (udāseena).[26] It is to the intellect, body, organs, etc., which are unintelligent belong the capacities to act and enjoy. Hence it must be the intelligent self linked to the aggregate of body, organs etc., Vācaspati argues, that gains the capacity to act and enjoy. Though the self is manifest, yet by

intermixture with objects like the intellect etc., somehow becomes the concept 'I' the subject of Iness. The intelligent self thus appears in the concept 'I' as agent and enjoyer.[27]

Now, it may be argued that if the self is not the doer, then the Śruti, smṛti etc., go futile and that there will be no one to be benefitted by them. This contention is wrong — points out Vācaspati inasmuch as the Śrutis, smṛtis etc., function only in the realm of avidyā and hence presuppose the agency of jīva, which is due to adhyāsa. Thus Vācaspati clarifies by saying that from the empirical stand point the jīva is certainly a doer; but the agency of jīva is adventitious and not inherent in the self.[27(a)] If the self, by its very nature is an agent it cannot be free from it and hence it can never attain release by overcoming its agency.[27(b)] He maintains that the self is not the agent of action but appears to be so due to association with the buddhi etc.,

Jīva, in its essence, further maintains Vācaspati is mere knowledge and not a knowing subject. It is of the nature of consciousness. It is the subject as opposed to the inert objects of its adjuncts like intellect, body, etc., These adjuncts so to say, limit or bind the conscious self

That is why ātman (self) always seems to appear through them. Hence it comes to be regarded as the agent through these adjuncts. But in reality it is knowledge itself and never the knower. Since the individual self is nothing but Brahman and as the essential nature of Brahman is consciousness, Vācaspati argues, the individual self is also of the nature of consciousness.[29]

Further since knowership involves change, the individual self in its essence is no knower, as the self is immutable. So cognisership cannot be the property of the self. It belongs to the internal organ (antaḥkarṇa). The self only appears to be the knower or cogniser because of the superimposition of the property of the internal organ on it. The manifestation of cognisership is an illusion for one who regards the body as the self, as in the case of the cognition 'I am fat'.

Vācaspati accounts for the superimposition of the cognisership on consciousness in a different way. Just as a white crystal when placed near a China rose appears to be red, likewise consciousness which is self, too, because of the proximity of the internal organ appears to be the cogniser. Cognizership thus is adventitious property of the self. In other words, the unattached self,

in the absence of superimposition is not a knower.[29]

Thus according to Vācaspati, through the self is a mass of pure consciousness and bliss devoid of agency and nature of an enjoyer and transcendent of all appearances, due to avidyā, it appears to be an agent and an experiencer of pleasure, pain, grief and delusion because of its being limited by the internal organ and egoism and an object of 'I-ness'.[30]

The empirical self limited by avidyā is the abode of the pramāṇas (means of knowledge). The known is free in its activity, in regard to valid knowledge.[31] Vācaspati avers that a knower is an agent of valid knowledge. Knowerhood is independence. It moves all means of valid knowledge to act. A mental mode cannot be of the nature of consciousness for the internal organ is unconscious. The self cannot be an agent of valid knowledge if the active internal organ is not superimposed on it. So because of superimposition of atman and the internal organ on each other, resultant valid knowledge abides in atman limited by the adjuncts of budddhi and aham-kāra.[32]

Thus according to Vācaspati, consciousness is the native quality of the soul. Ātman is of the nature

of consciousness. It persists always and there is never a time in which it is absent. It is infact its essential nature. It is ātman itself. It is eternal but its modifications (vṛittis) may be active or passive. They become active when there are objects and almost disappear in the absence of objects, as in deep sleep (sushupti). That is, it is vṛitti that disappears in the absense of object and never consciousness which is eternal, maintains Vācaspati.[33]

The pūrvapakshin contends that consciousness or jñāna is not native to the self. The self though eternal is found to be without consciousness at times. Moreover if we admit that consciousness is native to the soul it means that the sense organs go wasted because in that case it will be all consciousness and the sense organs will have no role to play at all in the perceptual process and hence they become superfluous. Thus consciousness is to be regarded, maintains the pūrvapakshin, as an adventitious quality of atman.[34]

Vācaspati subjects this view of the pūrvapakshin to critical examination and refutes it. If we accept the view of the pūrvapakshin then, says Vācaspati, we will have to admit that atman is inert (jada). But ātman is not inert

like a pot. If it is inert, then like other inert things ātman will become an object of doubt, illusion and indirect perception as an inert object is all these. But ātman is not an object of illusion, though it comes to have illusion of the inert objects like pot etc., Moreover ātman is not doubtful like the pot but the doubter, who doubts, not his own existence (for that is impossible) but the existence of other inert objects. Therefore ātman is of the nature of consciousness and at no time it becomes nought. That is, consciousness is eternal. The sense organs have a definite role to play, in that they are the means, which bring into birth the knowledge of the objects which have form, shape etc., Hence they are not superfluous, argues Vācaspati.[36] Knowledge cannot be the quality of even manas as the latter is only an instrument and it is preposterous to contend that without standing in need of another instrument the mind can operate by itself. In other words it is not knowledge (jñāna) that is an adventitious quality of the self but the cognizership. Thus Vācaspati concludes that the jīva in its essence is no knower or cogniser, no doer and no enjoyer, but knowledge itself.

8

Size of the individual self

Vācaspati discusses with regard to the question of the size of the individual self in his adhyāsa bhāshya. jīva, according to him, is not atomic because there would not then be the usage that 'I am fat' 'I am tall' etc.,

Now if jīva is not of the size of the atom, is it of the size of the body? Vācaspati says 'no'. If it is accepted that jīva is of the size of the body then it follows that it consists of parts like the body. And if it is admitted that the self also consists of parts, the collective activity of the self is to be accounted for. If it is admitted that each part of the self is free and independent, then it may be possible that the self would break, for the simple reason that the different independent parts may act in different directions at the same time. Hence there would result non-action. If it is admitted that the self as a whole works (intelligises) then, if something goes wrong with one part of the self, the other part also would go wrong with the result that the intelligent self would not intelligise. Then the conclusion is inevitable that the self dies, which is absurd. Hence, the individual self,

being Brahman in its essence must be vibhu or all-pervasive. It is non-sense to ask for the size of the jīva.[36]

Jīvatman is thus not atomic. Due to avidyā, there takes place, Vācaspati maintains, the mutual superimposition of the qualities of the internal organ and the self and vice versa. Thus it is antahkarana or Buddhi that is atomic and not the self.[37] Qualities like iccha (desire), Rāga (love) misery (dukha) etc. belong to Buddhi and not to the self. The self never falls a prey to samsara in the absence of its connection with buddhi etc.,[38] And since the qualities Buddhi etc., are superimposed on ātman (self), it comes to be called atomic, in saṁsāra.[39] But in reality it is 'vibhu' or ubiquitous.[40]

Thus Vācaspati is of the view that the individual self is neither of the size of the body (as against Jainism) nor of the size of an atom (as against the Dvaitins, viśiṣṭa-dvaitins etc.,). On the other hand it is vibhu or ubiquitous.

6

The individual self, in its essence, is immortal (amrta)

Further, according to Vācaspati the individual self is uncreated (aja) and hence eternal. It is anādi (beginningless). It is not at all different from Brahman

in its essence. It is not the effect of the cause viz., Brahman. Vācaspati quotes śruti to maintain that jīva is none other than Brahman, who has taken up a body.[41] And since there is no fundamental difference between Brahman and the individual self, and since, Brahman is immortal the individual self is also immortal and eternal. Thus Vācaspati argues for the immortality of the individual self.

Now a question may be asked: If the individual self is immortal, then how to account for the empirical usages that Chaitra is born and Chaitra is dead etc.,? Vācaspati answers this question by saying that these empirical usages refer to, the coming into being and passing away of the limiting adjuncts and not the self which is eternal and immortal.[42]

7

An account of avasthātraya

In Bhāmatī, unlike the Shānkarabhāshya and the Vārtika not much prominence is given to the discussion of avasthātraya. In the view of ~~xxx~~ Vācaspati, it is the mental dispositions (saṁskāras) that cause dreams which are nothing but remembrance reproduced. The dream is thus due to the defect of sleep.[43]

He thinks of dream as an example which clarifies māyāvāda.[44] That is why creations in dreams are said to be 'māyāmātra'. Eventhough the objects of dream like those of silver etc., are real as long as the dream lasts yet as they are liable to be sublated, the knowledge of dreams must be termed mithyajnana. It is undoubtedly mithyajnana as it does not stand to the test of logic and reason, and gets sublated later. Even though both dream and waking states are mithya, they continue to be true till the realisation of Brahman.[45]

But Vācaspati does not seem to have drawn a critical discussion on the jagṛt-svapna of the Māṇḍūkya kārika. It seems, he was of the opinion that the mithyatva of the two can be established by means of inexplicable theory (anirvachaneeyata). Regarding the discussion on Sushupti, Vācaspati more or less sides with Maṇḍana. Like Maṇḍana Vācaspati also says that in sushupti there is the disposition of 'vikshepa' (projection),[46] though not the operation of it. And because it is free from vikshepa operation, the jīva appears, in sushupti, to be in a pure condition.[47]

According to Vācaspati, in sushuptithere is the cessation of all the gross functions of the body. But it is not totally a non-dual (advaya) state, since in that state

also there persists avidyā in a subtle form. Vācaspati succinctly points to this. He says, just as manliness (paurusha) which is potentially present in a boy, comes to manifest in a later stage in life, so also, avidyā potentially presents in sushupti makes itself explict in the waking state. Creation is nothing but subtle energy becoming gross.[48] Vācaspati at another place in Bhāmatī points to the presence of avidyā, karma in a subtle from in the state of 'sushupti'[49]

And it cannot be maintained, says Vācaspati that avidyā which was not present in sushupti would suddenly take its birth afresh in the waking state, for that would imply that manliness (paurusha) would even emerge from an impotent. It is absurd to maintain, points out Vācaspati, that something which was not present even in a subtle state in someother thing, can be expected to come out later, as something cannot come out of nothing, and whatever is, has always been.[50]

Further, Vācaspati is of the opinion that in both sushupti and the jagṛt states, avidya and its vāsanas are present in the form of cause and effect.[51] In both pralaya and sushupti are present the dispositions of avidyā; but the only differente between the two is that

in sushupti, there is prāṇa, whereas in pralaya, it is not — points out Vācaspati.[82]

The jīva, according to Vācaspati has three bodies — the causal (kāraṇa śareera), the subtle (sūkshma śareera) and the gross (sthūla śareera). The kāraṇa śareera is nothing but nescience. The subtle body consists of five organs of sense, five organs of action, five vital airs, mind and intellect. The gross body is nothing but the physical. The jīva corresponding to these three bodies is respectively called prājña, Taijasa and Viśwa.

'8

Relation between Brahman and Jīva — Different theories of jīva

Now, with regard to the question as to the exact nature of jīva, there are divergent views. If Vācaspati maintains and develops avacchedavāda, the theory that jīva is an apparent limitation (avaccheda) of the unlimited Brahman, the Vivaraṇa school maintains and develops Pratibimba vada — the theory that jīva is but a reflection (pratibimba) of Brahman in avidyā. As slightly different from the Vivaraṇa view, Sureswara holds what is called Ābhāsa vāda, the theory that jīva is a false semblance of Brahman. In this section it is intended to elaborate and critically assess the relative merits of these theories.

(a) Avacchedavāda

According to this theory, the individual self (jīva) is nothing but the apparent limitation of Brahman by avidyā. It is based on the view that there exists a plurality of avidyas* and that the pure undivided Brahman apparently conditioned by these avidyas appears as the individual selves. That is to say, the jīvas are the limitations (avacchedas) of the pure Brahman by the individual nesciences. This theory is popularly called Avaccheda vāda or the limitation theory. Vācaspati seems to have derived inspiration for this theory from Gauḍapāda kārika (Advaita prakaraṇa).

The sum and substance of this theory may be stated thus: The individual self is not the reflection of pure consciousness in the internal organ (as the pratibimba vada of the Vivaraṇa school holds); rather it is the pure consciousness itself conditioned by the internal organs just as the all-pervasive ether appears to be limited when it is conditioned by pots, pitchers, etc.,[53] And release on this view, consists in the cessation of avidyā of that particular jīva. Though one jīva gets released, the other jīvas continue to be in bondage since the avidyas located in them continue. The unconditioned Brahman, which is the content of avidyā is

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* For a detailed account of the doctrine of plurality of avidyas vide Chapter VI

Iśvara. However Brahman is eternally free and has neither bondage nor release.

Thus, the jīvas according to this view, are nothing but the undivided universal consciousness seeming to be limited and multiplied by individual nesciences. The jīvas, are the one all pervasive Brahman appearing to be limited by the individual nesciences, the loci of two kinds of avidya* conscious doers and enjoyers.[64] Avaccheda vāda is very definite in saying that there is neither any reflection nor appearance of cit (pure consciousness) — as distinguished from the Pratibimbavāda of the Vivaraṇa school and ābhāsavāda of sureshwara — but only apparent delimitation of the unlimited absolute reality through the avidyās of the jīvas. Stated in other words, Avaccheda vāda is but a conceptual limitation of the unlimited through avidyā. It can be best illustrated by taking the analogy of Ākasha or space. Ākasha is an unlimited and all-pervading continuum. Yet it appears as if enclosing finite portions of the sky such as gṛhākāsha and ghatākāsha due to different ~~liming~~ limiting adjuncts like houses of different sizes and pots of different shapes and dimensions. In the same manner, the one unlimited reality viz., Brahman comes to be misconceived as limited realities

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* See Chapter VI

or finite existences on account of various and innumerable limiting adjuncts i.e., avidyā and its modifications such as minds etc.,[55] But in reality Brahman remains unaffected and untainted by the individual pains and pleasures as ākāsha is not affected by the dust and the vapour of a jar or a boul. The birth and death of the upadhis of jīva do not imply the birth and death of Brahman. And our supposition fostered of many realities is but a blatant superstition fostered by the distorting and obscuring nature of avidyā located individually in every jīva. Thus according to Avaccheda vāda, jīva is not a reflection, as also avidyā is not a medium of reflection insofar as formless (colourless) 'nirūpa' Brahman cannot be said to be reflected in avidyā which is also colourless.[55(a)]

Appaya Dīkshita discusses Avacchedavāda in the Parimala at the close of I. 1.4. Avaccheda, in his opinion means the apparent finitisation of the infinite. The infinite consciousness defined as it were by the internal organ is the jīva. When its defining adjuncts are removed through jñāna, it shines in its eternal light.

Now it must be said that according to Avaccheda vāda the world appears different in different individuals because of their different nesciences. Each individual self

as it is conditioned or apparently limited by its nescience (it being the locus of avidyā) is thus the material cause of the world appearance.[56]

(b) Pratibimba vāda

According to Bimba Pratibimba vāda of the Vivaraṇa school, jīva or the individual self is nothing but pure consciousness reflected in avidyā and its product mind, both in its gross and subtle states. Being a reflected image, it is overpowered by its limiting adjuncts. The true nature of Brahman is veiled from it; it identifies itself with the physical and the psychological accompaniments brought about by the vikshepa shakti of avidyā and therefore it experiences misery in the form of transmigration.[57] The reflection or image is called the 'pratibimba' and its original source or prototype which is Brahman is called the 'bimba'. According to this theory, pratibimba is a reflectional appearance ie., the original appearing by way of reflection as separate and distinct from itself. It is real in the same sense as the bimba, being identical with the latter.

Thus according to Pratibimba vāda, avidyā, which is superimposed on Brahman the pure consciousness, receives its reflection like a mirror receiving the reflection of a

face. The pure consciousness which serves as prototype (bimba) is Iśvara and He is not affected by the defects pertaining to the limiting adjuncts — avidyā. He is not overpowered by Avidyā on the other hand, He controls it. The truth of non-duality is not concealed from Him. He never loses sight of his identity with the non-dual Brahman.

To state the Pratibimba vāda still more clearly: the universal consciousness, the prototype, reflected in the root nescience is Iśvara. He is the ruler of the universe or the Lord. The same consciousness reflected in nescience limited by the internal organ and the impressions and potencies in it is an empirical self. The reflections are real like the prototype. But the reflections vary according to the nature and purity of the reflecting medium.

To summarise, according to Pratibimba vāda, the one self (Brahman) appears as many being reflected in numerous internal organs just as the single moon appears as many being reflected in the waves and so the plurality of selves is not ultimately real. Thus according to the Vivaraṇa school, antaḥkaraṇās are not the limiting adjuncts for they themselves are the products of avidyā. As they have a beginning in time, they are unsuitable for the beginningless limitation.

The advocates of the reflection theory do not agree among themselves in all details. Prakāshātman and his followers contend that avidya is one only and when the pure consciousness is reflected in it, there appears Iśvara and when this image of Iśvara is reflected in the ajnāna, it gives rise to the appearance of the jīva. Thus the jīvas are the very images of Iśvara.

According to Sarvajnātman, Brahman reflected in avidyā comes to be called as Iśvara and Brahman reflected in antaḥkaraṇa comes to be called as jīva. Bhāratitīrtha-Vidyāranya, in his Panchadashi advocates a view which is a combination of reflection and limitation theories.

The Vivaraṇa school further holds that the pure Brahman by its association with Māyā assumes, firstly the form of Virāt, Hiranyagarbha (or Sūtrātman) and Iśvara; and secondly the form of Viśva, Taijasa and Prājña, corresponding to the three states of jīva viz. waking (jagṛt), dream (svapna) and dreamless sleep (sushupti).[58]

(e) Ābhāsa vāda

Now coming to Abhasa vada (semblance theory). The Ābhāsavāda of Sureshwara is almost the same as Pratibimba vāda; it is different only in its conception and interpretation

of the nature of reflection. That is all.

According to Ābhāsavāda, the reflected image is not identical with the prototype. On the other hand, it is different from it and is indeterminable either as real or as unreal.[59] The pure consciousness that is reflected in avidya is Īśvara and the consciousness that is reflected in mind is jīva. Īśvara and jīva being reflected consciousnesses are different from the prototype consciousness and are indeterminable either as real or as unreal. The reflected consciousness in avidyā and in mind are falsely identified with the consciousness that serves as the prototype and this accounts for Īśvara being regarded as the creator and jīva as the knower, agent and enjoyer.

The difference between the reflection theory and the semblance theory may be stated as follows: If according to reflection theory, the jīvas are real, (as they are reflections of Brahman-consciousness, the prototype) and hence identical with it, according to semblance theory the jīvas only resemble Brahman (as they are only semblances) and hence are different from and not identical with it. Since they are the appearances of Brahman, they cannot be considered as either real or unreal.

The advocate of Ābhāsavāda has a definite purpose in postulating this theory. And that is to point out that the characteristics of Iśvara (such as creatorship, sustainership and destroyership etc.,) and that of jiva (such as knowership, enjoyership, doership etc.,) are only appearances, as jīva and Iśvara, according to Sureshwara in the ultimate sense, are not at all real but only appearances. These characteristics are falsely attributed to Brahman who is free from and far above, these characteristics.

Further this theory is of the view that eventhough Iśvara and Jīva enjoy the same status (i.e., both are resemblances of Brahman), jīva is overwhelmed by both the powers of avidyā — āvaraṇa and vikshepa, whereas Iśvara is not overwhelmed by the āvaraṇa śakti of avidyā. Hence if the jīva becomes a saṁsārin and undergoes pain and pleasure happiness and misery, Iśvara never becomes a prey to saṁsāra and hence keeps himself free from suffering and misery. He is ever liberated.

Thus according to Ābhāsavāda, jīva is neither a reflection nor a limitation but an appearance of Brahman.

9

Critical remarks:

The above theories are not free from defects.

Pratibimba vada can be criticised as follows: (i) It is unsound to argue that jīva is but the reflection of Brahman in avidya inasmuch as it is hollow and meaningless to talk of reflection of a colourless thing (nirūpa Brahman) in a medium, which is also colourless (avidyā). Strictly speaking reflections are of objects possessing colour (rūpa) in media also possessing colour (rūpa). But here neither the intelligence (prototype) nor nescience (the reflecting medium) possess colour (rūpa). How can there be reflection then, of one in another? This objection, in fact is anticipated by Vācaspati himself in his Bhāmatī.[60] Such a difficulty is cleverly overcome by a avaccheda vāda with its declaration that jīva is but Brahman (pure consciousness), defined as it were. This is a clear indication to the effect that Vācaspati rejected outright, the pratibimbavāda and accepted avacchedavāda.

(ii) Iśwara-consciousness, it should be said, does not exist in the internal organ in which it is reflected even as a face does not exist in a mirror in which it is reflected and that therefore, Iśwara cannot be the inner controller in all jīvas.

(iii) Further by reducing Iśwara to the status of reflection, the pratibimba vāda makes Iśwara a helpless

entity. He cannot be regarded as the controller of jīvas inasmuch as one reflection cannot control another reflection.[60(a)]

(iii) It is open to the objection that the flaws of the causal nescience, the adjunct, for instance non-omniscience etc., taint Iśvara, as a mirror, an adjunct, taints the reflection of a face on it with dirtiness.[61]

(iv) Further, there is another difficulty. To say that the reflection is an illusory creation is to maintain that jīva too is illusory and hence there could be none to be released. The Avaccheda vāda beautifully overcomes this difficulty by pronouncing that the jīva is but pure consciousness defined as it were. It should be noted here that avaccheda vāda has been employed by both Gaudapāda and Shankara, for keeping Iśvara apart from the taints of the jīva.[62]

(v) Again, according to the theory of reflection, with the destruction of avidyā, the medium of reflection, the jīva attains mukti. But the fact is that, when the medium is destroyed even the illusory self comes to be destroyed. That is it amounts to the destruction of the very self.

(vi) Śruti also seems to go against Pratibimba vāda. Śruti declares that Brahman is both transcendent and immanent to the individual souls and the world. But reflection

theory is bent on maintaining that Brahman stands transcendental to all these reflections. As a result it follows that Brahman cannot be immanent in them. Hence the reflection theory is unsatisfactory.

Ābhāsavāda may also be so criticised. It may be objected that pure consciousness are or atman is free, that a semblance of the self (chidabhasa) is bound, that bondage and liberation subsist in different substrates. It should also be said that one substrate exerts oneself to bring about one's own destruction inasmuch as the self is assumed to be bound by its semblance.

Prakāshātman offers the following criticism of Vācaspati's doctrine of limitation: If Brahman were limited by nescience or an internal organ or an adjunct as ether is limited by a jar, Brahman being entirely unlimited, in the state of jīva, the unlimited Brahman would exist outside the jīvas and would not be ubiquitous and creator of all.[63]

This objection is untenable in view of the fact that the so called delimitation of Brahman is only apparent and in no case real. Vācaspati is very explicit in saying that jīva is but pure consciousness limited 'as it were'.

This position is very favourable as the infinite Brahman can never become the finite; if it does, it will no longer be infinite. So Vācaspati is justified in contending that jīva is the result of apparent limitation of the unlimited Brahman. This stand of Vācaspati enables him to solve many problems which the other thinkers fail to do.

Thus avaccheda vāda is a well-knit and utterly simple explanation of the jīva. It offers a satisfactory explanation regarding the existence of a plurality of selves and their differences among themselves by declaring that the jīvas are because of the apparent limitation of Brahman, the ultimate reality, by individual nesciences.

10

Avacchedavāda is Vācaspati's distinctive theory

The charge against Vācaspati that he is loose and indiscriminate in accepting both[64] the pratibimba and Avaccheda vādās may now be critically considered. Various references are given to indicate that Vācaspati admits and advocates Pratibimba vāda:[65]

(i) Under I. 1.4 Vācaspati is said to advocate both the theories of limitation and reflection. There he says: "According to Śruti, jīvas are reflections of Brahman in the mirror of avidyā"

(ii) Under II.ii.18 Vācaspati is said to support reflection theory wherein he says: A reflection does not differ from its archetype in reality, but it acquires impurity from a mirror the medium of reflection. So a jīva imagined by avidyā, an adjunct, is like a reflection of Brahman or supreme ātman.—

(iii) While commenting on the section known as 'Rachanānupapatti adhikaraṇa'[65(a)] Vācaspati says: "avidya-upādāna kalpita avacchedo jīvah, Paramatma Pratibimba Kalpah".

(iv) In the Vākyānvaya adhikaraṇa[65(b)] Vācaspati says: 'avidyopādānam ca yadyapi vidyāsvabhāve paramātmani na sākshadasti tathāpi tat pratibimba kalpa jīvadvāreṇa parasmin uchyate'.

Critical remarks:

A close scrutiny of the above statements reveals one important point. And that is, by the word 'pratibimba' Vācaspati, does not mean that jīva is a reflection, but may be likened to a reflection for the purposes of exposition.[66] If it were so, he could have very well said, 'tat pratibimba jīva' instead of saying 'tat pratibimba kalpa jīvah'.

To elaborate further: In Vācaspati, no doubt there is a discussion of both the theories — this he cannot

avoid for the simple reason that he is a commentator. Shankara in his Bhāshya on the Vedanta Sutras has made use of both the analogies. He regards both the analogies as equally important and essential to understand the true nature of jīva. Commenting on Shankara's gloss on Vedānta Sūtras, Vācaspati cannot but express and expand Shankara's view. But mere mentioning of the name of a particular theory need not be taken to be the convinced theory of the mentioner. Though Vācaspati mentions it, he does not seem to develop and defend Pratibimba vāda. His repeated emphasis on Avacchedavāda, the serious reader of Bhāmatī comes to know, made him a bit suspicious of pratibimbavāda. It should be remembered that Vācaspati is just interpreting Shankara's view of pratibimba and it is a wrong in this connection, to say that Vācaspati favours pratibimba vāda. Vacaspati's pet and favourite theory regarding the nature of jīva is Avaccheda vāda and certainly not in any case, the Pratibimba vada. This can be made still more certain when we refer to adhyāsa bhāshya of Vācaspati wherein he points out (as already noted) that, since Brahman is formless (nirūpa), it cannot be supposed to be reflected in a medium which is also formless. This infact is his adverse criticism and outright dismissal of pratibimba vāda. It is an unmistakable reference to his rejection of the reflection theory. It is

a clear cut statement that sets at nought all elusive statements which later appear in Bhāmatī, in this regard. Thus, in his view, it is illogical and incorrect to talk of reflection of Brahman.

Moreover, in Bhāmatī, the instances of describing jīvatva as delimited by antaḥkaraṇa are comparatively greater than the instances which liken jīva to a reflection. In Vācaspati it is avacchedavāda that is dominating and assertive, pratibimbavada being meek and superfluous. In any case he does not hold pratibimba vada as seriously and with immediate concern as the Vivaraṇakāra does. Vācaspati makes it a point, whenever occasion arises, to impress upon the reader of Bhāmatī that avacchedavāda is his distinctive and decisive theory. He adopts a positive attitude towards it. To him it directly shows itself to be more fundamental than the reflection theory.

Thus in Vācaspati, we find that avaccheda vāda has its firm logical and psychological basis. It is only in and through it, that Vācaspati gives a very lucid account of the 'jīvatva' of atman. He considers it to be the most satisfactory view of the jīva as it is less abstract and as it does not embody the monopolistic interpretation of

of the pratibimba vada.

Hence the contention, that there is same fluidity in Vācaspati's view, with regard to the theory of jīva falls flat to the ground. It may safely be dismissed without any loss to Vācaspati himself. It is avacchedavāda that grows in meaning and becomes influential with him. It is avaccheda-vāda that is spelled out in more detail in Vācaspati. In this context Dr. Asutosh Sastri's contention is worth noting. Dr. Sastri, in his Bengali work 'Vedanta darshana-Advaita vada'[66(a)] is said to contend that in Vācaspati there is the discussion of pratibimbavāda,[67] but he has definitely advocated avaccheda vāda as an independent line of argument[67(a)] where he does not follow, Maṇḍana, his model of following, who in his Brahmasiddhi has supported Pratibimbavāda.[68]

Further, in his interpretation of Sāṅkhyakārika and yoga sūtras, Vacaspati has not adopted Bimba pratibimba method for the purpose of explaining the relation between purusha and prakrti. In the above writings he has used the word 'icchāya' to refer to the relation of cit to intellect. That intelligisation of buddhi together with aviveka (the assisting condition) is necessary for causing the confused perception of purusha, has been admitted by Vācaspati in his Sankhya-yoga works.

In short it should be said that Vācaspati thinks of pratibimba vāda as strictly less satisfactory than avacchedavāda. He delves deep into his commentary on Shānkara bhāshya to seek explanation in support of his view of jīva.[69(a)] In his Bhāmatī he has given a masterly survey of Avacchedavāda settingforth its breadth and depth with great clarity and penetration. He tells us in open and bold terms: "Non-different from the Lord is the jīvātman, as the pot ether etc., from the ether at large."[70] He compares the jīva to the etheric substance delimited by jar, pot etc.,[71] This is further confirmed by the attribution of avacchedavāda to Vācaspati by later thinkers like Madhusūdana Saraswati.[72]

Thus the natural conclusion to be drawn from a detailed and careful study of Bhāmatī is that, it is only Avacchedavāda that gets anything like a thorough and systematic treatment.

11

Concluding remarks:-

When all is said and done it must be pointed out that both pratibimba and Avacchedavādas are mainly based on analogies; the only point of differente is that, different analogies are made use of by these theories. As for instance, if the analogy of bimba and pratibimba (the prototype and its

reflection) is made use of by the vivarana school, the analogy of ghatākāsha and matākāsha is made use of by the Bhāmati school. Both these theories are almost unthinkable in the absence of the analogies. And it should be strictly noted, that like all other analogies, it is based on a half-truth. No doubt it conveys the spirit of Advaita splendidly, but analogical reasoning has its own limitations.

But what is the motive behind these theories? All these theories have the same purpose in showing that the so called jiva in its essence is not at all different from Brahman, just as a pratibimba cannot be different from its prototype . The motive behind Avacchedavāda, in particular is that, the true nature of ātman cannot be destroyed even if it appears to be limited by the adjuncts just as the unlimited space appears as if bound or limited by a pot, jar, etc., These theories strive to show that 'Jīvatva' (jivahood) is only adventitious (aupādhika) and not that jīva is distinct and separate (as opposed to Dvaita, Viśiśtadvaita and other thesistic schools of Vedānta) from Brahman, the supreme reality, one without a second (ekameva adviteeya) and thus to establish the truth of non-dualism. Thus all the theories

agree in saying that jīvabhāva, though anādi (beginningless) is not eternal. The jīvabhāva vanishes the moment its true essence is realised. Thus there is no ideational difference between these theories.

In conclusion, it should be strictly noted here that according to Shankara, both Pratibimba, avaccheda etc., are not 'theories' (vādas) but just simple analogies. In his Bhāshya on the Brahmasūtras, he makes use of both the analogies just to bring home the adventitious nature of jīva. There is no clear proof anywhere in the Shānkara bhāsya to the effect that he upholds, them as theories (Vādas). The contention of the Vivarana and the Bhāmati Schools that Pratibimba and the avaccheda analogies are also the 'theories' (vādas), it must be invariably pointed out, is too strained and artificial.

12

The individual self — one or many?

Regarding the question whether the jīva is one or many, there are different views among the post-Shankarites. If the followers of the Vivarana school hold 'single self theory' (Ekajīvavāda), the Bhāmati school advocates 'many self theories' (Anekajīvavāda).

Vācaspati is a strong advocate of the doctrine of many jīvas. According to him avidyās are many and there are innumerable jīvas which are the loci of the avidyās. There are as many jīvas as there are avidyās. The many jīvas are but Brahman conditioned by many avidyās. Brahman is one and the same; avidyās are different and many. The same Brahman when limited by a particular avidyā is one jīva. The same Brahman when limited by a different avidyā is a different jīva as distinguished from the previous. Like this there are many many jīvas. This is called Anekajīva vāda.[73] Madhusudana Saraswati, in his Siddhanta Bindu has beautifully summarised Vācaspati's position.[74]

And according to Vācaspati, the jīvahood remains only so long as avidyās remain undestroyed. The jīvas are then said to be in bondage or samsara. The jīvas lose their jīvahood the moment their avidyas are destroyedby jñāna. In other words, on this view the objective world does not disappear all on a sudden from the other jīvas as long as the avidyās residing in them are not removed from the respective jīvas. Thus if the world ceases to exist for one jīva whose avidyā has been removed by right knowledge, the world continues to exist for the other jīvas,

whose avidyās have not yet been destroyed. This theory thus cleverly avoids a serious absurdity, viz 'Eka muktau Sarva mukta prasanga' (the view that, if one jīva is released, all other jīvas are thereby automatically released)[75]— which is the inevitable outcome of Eka-jīva vāda of the Vivarana School. Anekajīva-vāda thus does justice to the existence of many jīvas, in the state of Vyavahāra, which is but a grand defence of commonsense realism. Here the idealist Vācaspati turns out to be a stubborn naive realist. It is this element of realism in Vācaspati, that makes his philosophy interesting and at the same time characteristically different from the Vivarana school. This is something novel to Vācaspati, which is his distinctive contribution as well. Here we can clearly see the influence of Sāmkhya on Vācaspati. But Vācaspati is never tired of saying that the so called jīvas in their essence are none other than Brahman.

As opposed to Anekajīvavāda, there is Ekajīvavāda, according to which there is only oneself, who being bound by one avidyā is deluded and the same jīva is released when that avidyā is destroyed. Thus according to this theory there exists only one self (jiva) and all other jīvas and phenomena are but the figments of imagination of that single jīva.

The existence of other jīvas and the phenomena, according to this theory, may be compared to the dream of that single jīva. Just as in a dream, only the dreamer has real existence and not the plurality of things he sees, so also only a single self has real existence, and the plurality of jīvas and the phenomena are like things seen in a dream. As long as this single jīva imagines, so long the appearance of other jīvas and the phenomena lasts. And the moment true knowledge dawns on the single self, it comes out of its own imagination and illusory experiences of the dream thereby putting a stop to the appearance of other jīvas and the phenomena. And according to this theory, the single self takes only one body and the bodies of all other selves are but the illusory experiences of that single embodied self. Many inferential arguments are put forward to show that there is only one jīva and the illusory character of many selves. "The bodies in question possess my own self as their selves, because they are bodies like my own body in question" "The self of all is myself, because it is sentient like my own self".

Thus the Ekajīva vādin goes to the extreme of treating everything except his own self as the presentation of a dream. He refuses to admit the existence of other jīvas, released or bound. According to him all is pure and simple illusion. In other words, he is a rank solipsist. This

theory is attributed to Prakāshānanda, the author of Vedānta Siddhānta Muktavali, according to whom there is only one avidyā which has Brahman for its locus and object. When avidyā conditions Brahman, there appears the phenomenal world. The inevitable outcome of this theory is that, there is no one who has been realeased. Even the release of such persons as Śuka and Vāmadeva, is to be understood as illusory as the release of the dream persons. The jīva being one, there is no, according to this theory, real difference between bondage and release. The difference between a bound self and a released self is like one perceived in dream.[76]

Critical remarks:

(i) This theory, on the very face of it appears to be defective. It should be said that Eka-jīva-vāda is no theory but a fancy. It fails to distinguish between the released and the bound self. But the very distinction between the bound and the released, presupposes many selves (jīvas), since the same self cannot both be bound and liberated at the same time.

(ii) This theory gives a deathblow to the very existence of Iśvara as the creator of the world, inasmuch as it holds that the other jīvas and the world of things

are but appearances of a single self. But it is commonly accepted that Iśwara is the creator of the world and not the self. Further it is incorrect and illogical to hold that among many bodies, only one body is animated and not the other bodies, for he will have to admit then, that all other jīvas are soulless, which is absurd.

(iii) If there be only one self, there cannot be a preceptor who has acquired the knowledge of Brahman and who can instruct an aspirant after release. Hence a bound soul can never be released at all. Thus this theory leads to the conclusion that there is eternal bondage and the sacred texts, which impart the means of overcoming bondage would go futile. So the single self theory is unsatisfactory.

Some other Ekajīva vādins, in order to overcome the above difficulties, maintain that Hiranyagarbha alone is that single self, who is the reflection of Brahman and that the other jivas are but the reflections of Hiranyagarbha, who animates the separate and distinct bodies. Thus according to this view, the separate and distinct bodies are bodies without the self, imagined by the single self.

Another group of Eka jīva-vadin's rejects this view also, as it is difficult to fix which Hiranyagarbha is the principal self, since Hiranyagarbha is different

according to ages in each aeon. Instead they hold that the single self entering into all bodies, animates all the bodies without any distinction.[77]

This view also goes against the common experience of the plurality of jīvas. If other jīvas, excepting Hiranyagarbha are, soulless bodies (as this theory contends), then they cannot experience any pleasure or pain or anything at all. But ite is a matter of common experience that one jiva experiences pain, pleasure etc., as distinct from the other jivas. Thus speaking from the empirical stand point, there should exist a plurality of jivas. The eka-jīva-vāda and its forms, it must be pointed out, are fancies rather than theories and therefore are fit to be treated only as such.

Before winding up the discussion, one specific point may be made: Both eka-jīva-vāda and Anekajīvavāda, though opposed to each other in their details, are one with the central thesis of Advaita Vedanta, viz., 'Ekātma vāda'.

13

To summarise the main points of Vacaspati's conception of jīva or the individual self.

(i) That there is a distinct and separate individual self other than Brahman is but a false illusion, a mischief played by avidyā — contrary to the views of sāmkhya-yoga, Nyāya-Vaiśesika, Pūrva Mīmāmsa, Dvaita, Viśiṣtadvaita and the other forms of difference cum non-difference (bhedābheda);

(ii) That the jīva, in its essence, is distinct from the body, sense organs etc., and that it survives the destruction of it — contrary to the views of the Chārwākas;

(iii) That jīvabhāva, though beginningless (anādi) is not eternal;

(iv) That, in reality, it is none other than the indifferent essence viz nirviśesha, (indeterminate) nira-avayava (Partless), nirākāra (formless), Nitya (eternal), nirguṇa (attributeless), nirvishayaka (objectless), niranjana (spotless), nirhetuka (causeless), anantha(infinite), akhanda (indivisible), aja (unborn), amṛta (deathless), akshara (indestructible), achala (immovable), apariṇāmi (non-transformable) or kutasthānitya (immutably eternal), asanga (a non-relational), Nitya śuddha buddha mukta svabhavam (etenally pure and ever liberated), svayam jyoti (self-luminous)

svayamsiddha (self-evident), śuddha chaitanya (pure consciousness), Satchidānanda (Existence, knowledge and bliss), Ekameva adviteeya (one without a second) Brahman;

(v) That, it is the knower, doer and enjoyer of actions though not in reality but owing to the irrepressible influence of the avidyāic forces;

(vi) That, in its essence, it is but pure consciousness (śuddha caitanya) bereft of all duality between the knower the known and the knowledge;

(vii) That, from the empirical stand point, jīva is many and not one, contrary to Eka-jīva-vāda;

(viii) That, the so called jīva is as unreal as Iśvara, in the ultimate sense (the ultimate reality being nirvisesha ātman);

(ix) That, the individual self (jīva) is the locus (āshraya) of avidya and not Brahman — contrary to the view of the Brahmāshrita avidyā vādins;

(x) That avidyā of one jīva differs from the avidyā of the other and that there is a plurality of avidyās;

(xi)

(xi) That, in its empirical condition it is but an inexplicable mixture of ātman (self) and anātman (notself) (like anatahkarana), the product of avidyā;

(xii) That, it appears to be deluded by beginningless inexpressible avidyā power (anādi avidyā-shakti);

(xiii) That, 'Jīvatva' is because of adhyāsa and avidya as identical with adhyāsa;

(xiv) That, the jiva is capable of throwing away its false adjuncts through knowledge of the real nature of its own self;

(xv) That, the realisation of its own true nature through constant meditation is immediate;

(xvi) That, it is neither a semblance nor so much a reflection or image or the manifestation of brahman through the locus of māyā, (contrary to the ābhāsa and pratibimbavādas), but is a seeming delimitation of the eternal pure ātman (Avaccheda) and is never a mode (prakāra), — contrary to the view maintained by the viśiṣṭadvaitins;

(xvii) That, in its essence, it is neither of the magnitude of the body (dehah pramāna) nor of atomic size (aṇupramāṇa) but vibhu (sizeless) — contrary to the views of the Jains, the Dvaitins and Viśiṣṭādvaitins respectively;

(xviii) That, in its pure essence, it is but an undeniable fact and never subject to doubt nor non-existent, nor temporal (— contrary to the views of the Śunyavādi Buddhists and early Buddhism — but pāramārthika.

(xix) That, in its essence, it is never a substance in relation to attributes — contrary to the view of the Nyāya-vaiśesika — but nirguṇa (attributeless);

(xx) That, in its essence, it is never a thing in relation to thought (achintyam); that it is beyond the grasp of the finite intellect (Agrahyam); that its realisation is incommunicable, but that it is the essence of all.

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CHAPTER - VI

THE NATURE OF THE PHYSICAL UNIVERSE

1

The status of the Universe (jagat) in Vācaspati's version of Advaita may now be discussed. If Brahman alone is real as Advaita contends, how to account for the world — a world of plurality which we experience? This is a legitimate and formidable question, which every monistic system has to answer.

The standard answer given to this question in Advaita is that the universe is 'mithya' (illusory). This is called the theory of the phenomenality of the worldly existence which was first put forward by the Vijñānavādins and the Mādhyamikās. This theory was later developed by Gaudapāda in his Māndūkya kārika. In order to establish the non-dual nature of Reality, it is imperative that the world should be shown to be mithya or illusory. As long as the 'mithyatva' of the world is not established, so long the true nature of reality (viz., Brahman) cannot be realised.

The Advaitic theory of the phenomenality of worldly existence is based on the following arguments:

(i) The Argument from Dṛśyatva

(ii) Argument from Vyavartamānatva

(iii) Argument from Dṛk-Dṛśya sambandha

i

According to the argument from Dṛśyatva, the phenomenal world is regarded as illusory (mithya), on the ground that it is presented to knowledge or that it is objective in character. Only the seer (dṛk) is real, not the seen (dṛśya) since a seen or shown entity, invariably depends on another consciousness being for being known and used, just as in a dream it is only the seer that is real and not the dream itself. The knowable is that which is not self-luminous, but the seer (or ātman) is self-luminous.* Thus according to this argument, whatever is cognized is illusory, like the shell-silver.

The Advaitin elaborates the meaning of mithyatva thus: 'Mithya' is that which is neither real nor unreal but different from both. That is to say, the universe is illusory (mithya) in the sense that it cannot be characterised either as real or as unreal. The universe is not real because it gets sublated by Brahman-knowledge. And by 'real' Vācaspati means any entity which has the nature of its own, which is not produced by causes, which is self luminous and which is not dependent on anything else. The real is the

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* vide Chapter II

independent uncaused being. Whatever is relative or dependent is unreal. Thus the real is that which is not sublated at any time. The universe is not real in this sense. Nor is it unreal because what is unreal cannot be cognized while the universe is cognised. Further it cannot be maintained that the universe is both real and unreal because of contradiction. Hence it is something different from both real and unreal. In otherwords it is indeterminable (anivachaneeya). The world is false in this sense of being indescribable in its nature.

Similarly according to Padmapāda the world is false because it is indeterminable. It is false as it cannot be defined as the substratum of either being or not being.[1]

In a like manner, Prakāshātman thinks that the world must be considered to be false, since it ceases with the knowledge of the corresponding substratum.[2]

ii

According to the argument from Vyāvartamānatva, what is real must be unchangeable. The objects of our experience cannot be regarded as real, since they come

and go. That is, they are constantly changing. The world is neither a pure being nor pure non-being. Things of the universe are not, but always become. They appear for some time and then vanish into nothing. Noneternal entities are always like that. They have a limited temporal existence. What is limited in time, space and content (pariechinna), is false as in the case of illusory appearances.[3] But the self being unlimited in space-time and content is not false says Amalānanda.[4] The self exists every where (sarvatra), at all times (sarvadā) and in every ~~whose~~ way (sarvathā). The self is in no sense absent. But things other than the self exist at some time, in some place and are determined by something.[5] Hence the universe must be regarded as illusory, argues Vācaspati.

Thus according to Vācaspati, the world is a phenomenal reality and not an absolute reality. It cannot be as real as Brahman inasmuch as the former is inert, subject to everyday change and decay, while the latter is pure sat-chit-ānanda, immovable self-luminous unique consciousness. In otherwords, the world is a seeming expression of reality and not real existence.

According to the argument from Dṛk-Dṛśya Sambandha (subject-object relation), the so called object itself is unintelligible, let alone its relation to consciousness. As relation necessarily involves relata, without the relata, relation is unthinkable. Now it may be asked: How exactly are the relation and the relata related with each other? Obviously, answer to this question involves an infinite regress.

There are further difficulties regarding the nature of subject object relation. It can neither be an external relation nor an internal one. It cannot be an external relation, as the subject is not a corporeal thing. Even it cannot be an internal relation as consciousness cannot be inherent in the object. Can there be at least the relation of identity between the two? Not at all, as the two are opposed to each other.[6] It is absurd to talk of identity between them.

Thus both consciousness and object cannot be equally real. Of the two, the former is indubitable (as it is self-luminous and hence self-evident), whereas the

latter is dubitable insofar as its existence is dependent on consciousness. Thus only pure consciousness (Brahman) is real and the object is illusory.

Again, according to Advaita, consciousness is undivided (akhanda). This unity of consciousness implies that there can be no relation between consciousness and the other. Infact, the 'other' does not exist at all, as Brahman is itself all-existence.

Further, the criterion of Reality, according to Vācaspati is abādhitattva (non-sublation) and svaprakāshatva (self-luminosity); it is not arthakriyākāritva (the capacity of doing work) of the Buddhists; nor is it the participation of the class concept of being as the Naiyāyikas hold. He defines reality as immediate self-revelation (svaprakāshata) which is never contradicted. Only the pure Brahman can be said to be ultimately real in this sense.[7]

2

Theory of Causation

In the foregone pages, it was seen that according to Vācaspati, the 'objective' world is phenomenal. If so

how does it happen at all? What makes its 'appear'? This involves consideration of the doctrine of causation.

1

<u>Vivarta vada</u>

Causation is a prime category in life. Experience becomes possible only when we presuppose causation. In his conception of causation Vācaspati closely follows Shankara. The Advaita doctrine of causation is known as Vivartavāda, as opposed to the Asatkāryavāda or Ārambhavāda of the Nyāya-Vaiśesika and the sat-kāryavāda of the sāmkhya-yoga systems. According to vivarta vāda, the effect is not a transformation (parināma) of cause, but is only a manifestation (vivarta) of the cause. Since the effect is only a manifestation and not a transformation of the cause, the cause remains unaffected in its nature.

Further, according to Vivartavāda, Brahman is the basis of the illusory appearance of the universe. That is, the universe is an illusory manifestation of Brahman; Brahman itself appears as the universe. The Advaitin explains this, on the analogy of the rope appearing as the snake. The rope does not transform itself into the snake.

On the other hand, it only appears as the snake due to ignorance (ajñāna). The rope is regarded as the cause of the appearance of the snake inasmuch as it is the basis of the illusory snake. So also, Brahman which is the basis of the world appearance, is to be regarded as the material cause of the universe,[8] contends Vācaspati. The vivartha view seems to be more satisfactory as it beautifully reconciles the mutually contradictory scriptural texts with its admission of the fact that the universe is an illusory manifestation of Brahman. This is the theory of vivarta advocated by Vācaspati in his Bhāmatī. He explains this theory of vivarta more clearly than Maṇḍana.[9]

Vācaspati denies the sāṁkhya contention that the cause and effect are idential on the other hand, Vācaspati holds that the relation between cause and effect is inexpressible (anirvachaneeya).[9(a)] He explains the relation between cause and effect as 'ananya'. But by the term 'ananya', he does not mean abheda (non-difference), as is maintained by sāṁkhya.[10] On the other hand it means that the effect has no reality in itself apart from that of the cause. In fact Vācaspati interprets the term 'ananya' neither as difference (bheda) nor as identity(abheda) but

inexpressible (anirvachaneeya). In giving this new interpretation he differs both from the Nyāya-Vaiśesika and the sāṁkhya systems.

ii

<u>Vācaspati's Refutation of Asatkāryavāda</u>

Vācaspati subjects the Nyāya-vaiśesika view of causation to critical examination.[11] The Nayāya-vaiśeśika view of causation is known as Ārambhavāda or Asatkāryavāda. This theory has a peculiar view as far as the effect is concerned. It maintains that the effect is 'asat' (non-existent). It adopts a commonsense, every day view and holds that the effect is non existent before its creation. According to this theory, it is the activity of the agent that <u>creates</u> a kind of <u>new</u> effect from the cause which was non-existent, before the operation of the agent. An instance would make this commonsense theory clear. A jar before it was moulded into a 'form' by the potter. That is to say, the potter creates a new effect (pot) from the cause (clay). With this instance the Nyāya-vaiśesika philosophers seem to drive home these points: (i) that prior to its production, the effect as such is non-existent; (ii) that the effects have a temporary existence. That is, they abruptly come into

being and soon vanish away; (iii) that the cause and effect stand in relation of sequence and can never be identical. That is, cause and effect appear in our consciousness as separate, just as a jar is not identical with its cause viz., clay.

Vācaspati refutes Ārambhavāda. Ārambhavāda is replete with serious difficulties. To the very first sight it appears to be inconsistent. If the cause were absolutely non-existence before its production, as maintained by the Nyāya-vaiśeṣika thinkers, it could not at all be brought into being inasmuch as something cannot come out of nothing and whatever, is, has always been. For instance, we can bring into being the oil from (mustard) seeds, as it potentially exists in the material cause (mustard seed), by pressing it. But we cannot extract oil from the sand insofar as the oil is supposed to be completely non-existent, even potentially in the seed. Hence non-existence can never be transformed into existence.[12]

Furthermore if we accept the hypothesis of Ārambhavāda, then, Vācaspati tells us, we will be forced to admit a plurality of causes. If the effect does not exist potentially in the cause prior to its manifestation and

does suddenly come into being. (as maintained by the Nyāya-vaiśeṣika), we will have to land ourselves in hopeless absurdities; we will then be forced to believe th t anything can come out of anything else and there is no certainty that the same cause, will produce the same effect. But we know from experience that the causal connection is a necessary relation; we get oil from the (mustard) seed only because oil is inherent in the seed. Thus Vācaspati concludes by saying that to accept that the same cause will produce the same effect is to accept that the effect remains implicit in the cause before its manifestation. In other words, the effect is not purely asat or non-existent prior to its production; it is to be found inhering in the cause and in the process of causation what is implicit merely becomes explicit.

iii

Vācaspati's Refutation of satkāryya vāda

Now, Vācaspati subjects the Saṃkhya view of causation to critical examination. The Saṃkhya philosophers show an improvement over those of the Naiyāyikas in their view of causation. They hold that the effect is real or 'sat'. Their theory is called satkārya vāda. They hold

that the effect is implicitly present in the cause and effect are identical; cause and effect are not two different realities; the cause manifests itself in the effect; the two are the different aspects of the same phenomenon. To put it in clear terms, the cause, according to the sāṅkhya philosophers, before its transformation may be called the cause, and after its transformation may be called the effect. Causation in their view is a process of becoming in which the cause gradually changes and reappears in the effect. Thus satkāryavāda runs counter to the Ārambha vāda of the Nyāya-vaiśeṣika system.

Vācaspati refutes the satkāryavāda. His view of causation is known as vivarta vāda. The effect according to this theory is not transformation (parināma) of the cause (as is held by the sāṅkhya philosophers, but is the manifestation (vivarta) of the cause, and in the process, the cause remains unaffected. Vācaspati here rejects the very contention of the sāṃkhya philosophers that the cause transforms itself into the effect.[13] Vācaspati asks: what exactly do you mean by the transformation of the cause into effect? What is the nature of the entire cause that is transformed into diversified forms?

Is it partless or is it endowed with parts? If it be partless, it goes to prove that complete change is produced in the primordial cause in every form of transformation and the effect must be eternal. If we accept the second alternative, the premordial cause becomes no longer eternal, but perishable.[14]

Further, if transformation implies a complete change of cause, knowledge would be impossible for it makes everyt state of existance different from the previous state. It also further leads to the acceptance of duality. Thus pariṇāma is not real. It is imagined because of avidyā. And that which is unreal cannot touch Brahman.[14(a)]

Vācaspati points to these defects and shortcomings of satkāryavāda and rejects it a outright replacing it by his own theory of vivarta.

And according to vivartavada, the effect, as already pointed out, is a mere appearance.[15] It does not possess the same amount of being as the cause. Hence Brahman does not really transform itself into the world; but only appears due to avidya, as the world. In this sense it is an appearance and is valid only from the empirical stand point. It is false or non-existent from the ontological standpoint.

Thus reality (i.e., Brahman) does not and cannot actually transform itself into the world; for only a thing which is made out of parts can transform itself or 'become' something, as for instance milk becoming curds. But Brahman being partless (akhanda) cannot become anything. Further srutis declare that Brahman is aparinami (non-transformative). It is 'Kūtastha nitya', 'sarva vikriya rahita' and 'nishkriya'. Hence the so called world cannot be a part of Brahman as Ramanuja holds; nor is it a self-subsisting entity. Brahman only manifests itself as the world. Advaita thus searches the truth to the bitter end without resting in half-way houses. The relation between Brahman and the world is a one sided relation. The relation is from Brahman to world and not vice versa. The world is a dependent existence and is dependent on the absolute eternal existence of Brahman, one without a second. It appears, says Vācaspati, as the world through avidyā. Avidyā is thus the sahakarikārana of the world.

Vācaspati takes pains to declare that causation is real only from the empirical standpoint and he throws it over-board, from the ontological view point, as it is self-discrepant. From the ontological point of view where the pure all exclusive Brahman is the only reality,

causation is inapplicable and hence loses all its force. Brahman, transcendentally looked at, is neither the 'cause' nor the 'source' of the world, because the concepts like 'cause', 'source' etc., all being empirical cannot be applied to the aloof and indifferent (kevala and udaseena) Brahman. Thus from the ontological point of view there is nothing like the emergence of the universe from Brahman.[15(a)]

iv

<u>Brahman with avidyā is the material cause</u>

According to Vācaspati, Brahman in conjunction with nescience (avidyā), from the empirical view point, is the material cause of the universe.[16] The universe exists in Brahman and is absorbed even in it, just as a snake has for its material cause, the rope in conjunction with the ignorance of the rope. The snake exists if the rope exists and is absorbed in the rope. Thus Brahman with avidyā, resting in the jiva, is the material cause of the world in which the world is grounded and absorbed.[17] He seeks to interpret the relation in a nondualistic way. Brahman is the ultimate truth underlying the world of appearance. The element of change and diversity is due to avidyā. The world is a false appearance of Brahman associated with indefinable two-fold avidyā.[18] Brahman

that knows and resolves with beginningless indefinable avidyā is the material cause of the world.[19] Thus avidyā, according to Vācaspati is only a sahakāri (instrument) by which the one Brahman appears as the world of appearances. In this sense avidyā may be regarded as parināmi-upādāna and Brahman as vivartopādāna.[20]

To the sāmkhya philosophers, prakrti is itself the material cause of the world. But Vācaspati does not grant that avidyā is straightwway the cause of the world, as it is inert (jada). Even Brahman cannot be said to be the cause of the world singlehanded, as it is a mere mass of pure consciousness. Thus the cause of the world is not Brahman single handed, nor is it avidyā by itsalf. On the otherhand it (the cause of the world) is the conjunction of Brahman and avidyā.

According to Padmapāda, Brahman is the cause of the world inasmuch as the world appearance is manifested on the ground of Brahman, the reality. Prakāshātman elaborates this by offering three alternative views: (i) Brahman and māyā like two twisted threads are together the joint cause of the world. This is same as Vācaspati's view. (ii) that which has māyā as its power is the cause and (iii) that, Brahman which has māyā supported on it is the

cause of the world.[21]

V

Vācaspati's refutation of Pradhāna as the material cause[8]

Vācaspati refutes the sāṁkhya view that pradhāna (unconscious prakṛti) is the material cause of the universe. According to him, pradhāna cannot be the cause of the world as it is non-intelligent (acit). The cause of the world must be intelligent, for there is design and order in the universe, which cannot be traced to non-intelligent prakṛti. The world is differentiated by name and form like pot etc., and it must have an intelligent being as its cause. Pradhāna which is devoid of form smell, taste etc., canot give rise to the world which is all these, because as is the cause so must be the effect, as accepted by the sāṁkhya philosophers themselves. This leads to the absurd conclusion that something which is not implicitly present in someother thing would come out later, the acceptance of which would compel the sāṁkhya philosophers, to invite with open arms, the asatkāryavāda, to which they are dead opposed. Further after pralaya there would be no incentive for further creation as there appears to be no special cause for it. If causeless creation is admitted, it gives rise to the view that even the liberated souls should again be created — which is absurd. Hence the view that

pradhana is the material cause of the universe falls flat to the ground.[82]

Like the sāṁkhya prakṛti the Advaitin's 'avidyā' is also unconscious (achetana). Vācaspati points out that sāṁkhyan prakṛti being jada (inert) cannot work without having chetana or consciousness at its basis. On the other hand, avidyā though being jaḍa, works as it has parameśvara as its basis. Parameśvara, being the content of avidya thus acts as the efficient cause. It is the basis of the illusion of the world, just as a rope is the basis of the illusion of the snake.

The sāṁkhya philosophers in turn may argue against the upādānatva of Brahman. They may maintain that partless Brahman cannot give rise to the world which is divisible. This objection cannot be raised against Advaita since according to it, Brahman is only vivartopādāna whereas avidyā is pariṇāmi upādāna. Further, the objection cannot be raised against Advaita since the same may be raised against the sāṁkhya, as pradhāna is also partless. It is also against the Nyāyavaiśeṣika atomic theory which maintains that partless atoms in their togetherness give rise to objects of magnitude. But advaita is free from these defects, as pariṇāma according to it, is only āvidyaka and not real.

It is seeming expression of reality and not real existence.[23]

Thus, according to Vācaspati Brahman in association with avidyā in the jīva, may be viewed as the cause of the world, inasmuch as pure Brahman which is 'nishprapancha' (acosmic), cannot be regarded as the cause by itself. This however, should not be taken to undermine the supremacy of Brahman as it alone is the primary basis (adhisthāna) of all that is inexplicable. Thus, in Vācaspati's view, Iśwara (Brahman together with avidyā), from the lower standpoint, is the cause of the universe. It is intelligent and creates the external world after having considered its name and form. A nonintelligent being, cannot create, because it cannot consider the name and form in the intellect.[24] All this creation, according to Vācaspati is anirvachaneeya.[25] The effect or a group of effects is but a name (vākmātra). It holds good only for the purposes of vyavahāra. Philosophically it is not. It is just a name and form. It is only projection (vikalpa). Only the cause (Brahman) is real. Only the clay is real, not its modifications (vikārās) like pots etc., That which is of the nature of appearance-disappearance is false as is the mirage; that which exists always is real as is consciousness (cit or chidātma). The world is an effect limited by

objects in the nature of names and forms or appearances that are neither real nor unreal but 'indefinable.[26] They are anrta. Infact, Vācaspati repeatedly says, that everything else, other than Brahman is inexplicable (anirvachaneeya).[27] Thus in Bhāmatī, there is a wonderful record of the anirvachaneeya— vāda best explained.

Thus, the objection that the complex and multifarious world cannot be regarded as the effect of the cause, Brahma (which is simple and homogeneous) does not stand, inasmuch as the mysterious role played by avidyā is a fact of empirical existence (samsāra). Avidya being the principle of cosmic illusion introduces multiplicity, subject object relation, particularization etc., where there is one, undifferentiated, supreme reality. Infact avidyā is described as one which is capable of bringing together two incompatible things.[28] Thus Vācaspati concludes that the ever existent Brahman appears, through avidyā, of the jīva as the inexplicable form of the world.[29]

vi

Further Vācaspati seeks to show that Brahman and the world are not different inasmuch as the former

is the immanent ground of the conditional reality viz. the world. But Vācaspati is shrewd enough here, to maintain that the world and Brahman are not identical though not different. To regard it as the identical with Brahman is a wrong conclusion, according to both Shankara and Vācaspati Mishra. Real identity is negated. This is so because, the question of identity according to him arises a only between two distinct and separate entities which are equally valid. Since the world is not as true as Brahman, it cannot be identical with Brahman.

Thus real identity is negated. But the negation of identity does not prove the real difference between Brahman and the world. Brahman is the ontological reality, but the world is a false appearance. They have different degrees of reality and hence there cannot be any real difference between them, as real difference depends upon the reality of the distincts — The entity possessed of an entity and the entity possessed of its counter entity.[30]

Thus Vācaspati says that the Advaitin's concern is not so much with the establishment of identity between Brahman and the world of appearances; rather it is with the

outright repudiation of all diversity whatsoever. This stand taken by Vācaspati helps him to maintain that the original cause of the world (viz. Brahman) remains unaffected in its purity etc., as it is not identical with the world though not different from it.[31]

vii

Critical remarks

Vācaspati, it is clear, is against the view that the world is completely illusory. The position of Vācaspati is that motion, multiplicity, change — all these are the essential features of the sense world. They do exist. But the external world is not the true being. Vācaspati does not deny that the world exists. He does not deny that the multiplicity exists. To be precise, Vacaspati does not deny, the world; what he denies is the truth of its existence. That is, according to him, the objects around us have existence, but not self-existence. That is, their existence is not grounded in themselves, but is grounded in another viz., Brahman and flows from it which itself is self-existent and self-substantial. They are therefore the appearances (vivarta) of Brahman, in this sense,

and Brahman is the only reality. Mithya it should be noted, is a technical word used in a sense peculiar to Advaita. It should not be equated with either a fiction or a void (śunya). (This is the sense in which the commonsense man uses the word). Thus, to say that the world is an appearance (mithya), is not to say that it is completely unreal as hare's horn or the merest sky-flower. In its technical sense, as used in Advaita, mithya means 'anirvachaneeya' (the inexplicable); it means a dependent entity. It is real for all practical purposes but is non-eternal, as it is liable to sublation, the moment the higher reality (a viz Brahman) is realised.[32] Hence the world is not 'satya' in the sense Brahman is; Brahman, the Real, is that which never gets contradicted at any time (trikala ābādhita). Vācaspati says that every object in the world is anirvachaneeya as it is neither 'sat' nor 'asat' but different from both (sadasatvilakshana). It is a conditional reality. Thus when the upanishads declare that the world is false (mithya), what is really meant, according to Vācaspati, is that it is conditional and not that it is a void (śunya). This defence of the world as a conditional reality is to be found amply in Bhāmati.[33]

Thus, in the view of Vācaspati, Advaita is not a world, denying philosophy but a world-transcending philosophy

He may be regarded as a realist from the empirical point of view and an absolutist from the highest point of view.

3

The Doctrine of Avidyā (nescience)

i

Nature of Avidyā

It is necessary to focus more attention on the concept of Avidyā in Advaita. Avidyā otherwise called ajñāna, is the name given to the cosmic principle which gives rise to the illusion. It is the pivot on which the whole of Advaita philosophy rotates, it is one of the key concepts on which the Advaita epistemology, metaphysics and axiology ultimately depend. It, in other words, is the coping stone of the Advaitic edifice. It is so to say, the gateway to Advaita philosophy. Nevertheless it has been the source of much confusion as it is abtruse and mystifying.

At the outset, it should be said that the doctrine of avidyā in Advaita is not something imported from outside. It should also be noted here that it is not, as it is sometimes claimed, a disguised version of the Mādhyāmika and the vijñānavāda schools of Buddhism, though it resembles very much

the same. In these schools also, though it is avidyā that causes non-apprehension of the real and mis-apprehension of it as something else, the postulation of forms of Brahman is entirely foreign to the schools of Buddhism. On the other hand the upanishads implicitly speak of avidya and shvetashvatara upanishad is very particular about the explicit mention of Avidyā otherwise termed māyā.[34] In Gaudapāda kārika, again, it occurs very frequently. It has thus its solid support in the scriptures. It cannot be designated in any positive terms. Vācaspati is of the view that the more a philosopher tries to unravel the mystery of avidyā, the more he gets entangled in it. It refuses to submit itself to logical reasoning.

Now, the questions that raise their heads in this connection are: what is the nature of avidyā? Is it something real? Has it any ontological status? etc.

According to Vācaspati, avidyā is neither real nor unreal. It is not real, in the sense Brahman is, as it gets sublated by Brahman-knowledge. Nor is it completely unreal like the merest sky flower or the son of a barren woman. It is experienced and hence cannot be simply dismissed as wholly unreal. If it is neither real nor unreal can it be

real-unreal? No, because of contradiction. Again, the question props in. If avidyā is neither real nor unreal, what else is it? Vācaspati, with his fellow Advaitins, answers this question by saying that it is something unique, a third something, different from both 'sat' and 'asat' (sadasadvilakshana). It stands midway between the two extremes. It is unspeakable, indescribable and indefinable. It does not come under any of the means of knowledge (pramāṇas) Its nature is shrouded in a mystery. It is beginningless (anādi), but has an end as it disappears with the onset of Brahman intuition. It has thus no ontological significance but only epistemological significance. Even as an epistemological concept, it is not self-explanatory. It suffers from an inner contradiction and hence it must be treated as an appearance of the ultimate reality, viz. Brahman, Thus the admission of the concept of avidyā in Advaita does not pose a challenge to the ultimate reality, as avidyā is not a rival reality existing side by side with Brahman.

Further, avidyā according to Vācaspati, plays a dirty trick on the jīva in not understanding its true nature. It is a great mischief maker, as it is endowed with two vile powers viz., 'āvarana shakti' (covering the true nature of reality) and 'vikshepa shakti' (distorting the true

nature of reality and projecting it as something else). Avidyā not only screens the true nature of Brahman, the reality but also distorts it and projects something in its place. It presents Brahman as different from what it is. Samsāra is the outcome of this mischief of avidyā. The individual self (jīva) though Brahman in its essence seems to forget its own true nature because of the operation of 'āvarana shakti' of avidyā; it falls a victim to the delusion of samsāra as avidyā distorts its true nature, (that it is 'sat' 'chit' ānanda) and projects it as a useless creature (kshudrajantu), that it is of the nature of misery etc., It thus comes to be bound in the meshes of samsāra. Infact the aim of vedānta according to Vācaspati is to destroy this avidyā, along with its impressions, which is the seed of all evil.[35] Only then that the jīva realises its true nature (that it is none other than the blissful Brahman).

ii

<u>Avidya is bhavarupa</u>

Further, avidyā in the view of Vācaspati, is not mere absence of knowledge but something positive (bhāvarūpa). Avidyā is not mere absense of knowledge (as it would literally mean), for in that case, it could

not even be known to exist. It is the cause of the appearance of the manifold universe. It must be regarded as positive as it is only a positive entity that be known without the knowledge of the counter correlative (prati--yogin). It is only a negative entity that presupposes the knowledge of the counter correlative, but not that which is positive. Again, error in illusory experience according to Advaita, is something positive as it consists in the positive assertion of something else as knowledge. This goes against the view that nescience (avidyā) is mere absence of knowledge.

Further avidya must be regarded as bhavarupa, inasmuch as our experience of it is positive and immeidate in the form: 'I did not know nacre; but now I know', 'I am foolish' etc., Again it is positive as we do have actual experiences both of ignorance and of its removal by knowledge. Thus even perception establishes the positive nature of ajnāna.

Again we have śrutis which declare ajnana as a positive entity. For instance:

(i) "Hidden by what is untrue"[36]

(ii) "Then there was neither non-being nor being; there was darkness hidden in darkness"[37]

(iii) 'Indra through Mayas takes on many forms'[38] etc., etc.,

Again, Vācaspati is of the opinion that avidyā (in the form of Buddhi etc) persists in a potential form in deepsleep (sushupti) and dissolution (pralaya), just as manliness (paurusha) is potentially present in a boy which later comes to manifest itself in his youth. This should be so supposed, argues Vācaspati, for otherwise, we should expect manliness to manifest even in an impotent (shanda), which is absurd. In short, according to Vācaspati production is not accidental and if something emerges from someother thing, the emergent must be supposed to be already present, in a subtle form in the thing, from which it emerges.[39] This is a clear indication to the effect that Vācaspati believes in Mūlāvidyā which persists in sushupti and pralaya.

Amalānanda, Vācaspati's commentator, defends Vācaspati's conception of of Mūlāvidyā,[40] which is positive (bhāvarūpa) and beginningless (anādi) in character. He calls it (jaḍātmāvidyā, bhāvarupāvidyā.[41] The other kind of avidyā according to Amalānanda is a series of latent impressions arising from previous erroneous cognitions (anya pūrvapūrva bhrama saṁskārah). Amalānanda thus explains two kinds of avidyā.[42] He, unlike Vācaspati, proceeds to establish the positive character of

ajnāna by means of pramāṇās like inference etc.,

Vācaspati further agrees with Maṇḍana in saying that agrahaṇa (non-apprehension) and viparyayagrahaṇa or vikshepa saṁskāras (distrorting dispositions) exist in both susupti and pralaya.[43] The same is maintained by prakashatman in his vivaraṇa. According to him, in dreamless sleep, the self is directly aware of itself, of its natural bliss and of positive nescience.[44]

Further, commenting on the sutra I.iii.30, Vācaspati says that at the time of mahāpralaya, (the great dissolution) all the products of avidyā such as antaḥkaraṇa (internal organ) etc., stop functioning and are merged in their root cause, the indescribable avidyā and exist as potential capacities. When God terminates mahāpralaya, the potential capacities come out like the limbs of a tortoise or like the rejuvenation of the bodies of frogs during rains, which were till then remaining inert and lifeless. In otherwords the hidden potentialities of the root cause make themselves explicit in the form of particular names and forms. This interpretation of the above sūtra is a clear indication, that Vācaspati believed in Mūlāvidyā which is beginningless (anādi), objective (bhāvarūpa) and indescribable (anirvāchya).[42]

Nevertheless it must be pointed out that there is no specific defense of mūlāvidyā in Bhāmatī. This is so because, Vācaspati in his Bhāmatī, does not proceed to prove the existence of avidyā by any of the known means of knowledge like pratyaksha, anumāna, śabda, arthāpatti etc., Probably Vācaspati might have thought that it was useless to ask for the proof of avidyā as it is proved by One's own consciousness. No proof of avidyā as a positive entity is called for, Vācaspati might have thought, for it is patent to all. As against this Padmapāda is very explicit in his admission of a positive beginningless inexplicable entity which is the material cause of adhyāsa. He even proceeds,[46] like Citsukha,[47] Vimuktātman,[48] Ānandabodha,[49] etc., to prove the existence of positive avidyā by pramāṇas like pratyaksha, arthāpatti etc., Similarly prakāśhātman.[50] also elucidates and proves the positive nature of avidyā by pramāṇas.

iii

Two kinds of Avidyā

Vācaspati recognises two kinds of avidyā (i) mulāvidyā or kāraṇa avidyā (or primal nescience) and (ii) Tulāvidyā or kārya avidyā (or derivative nescience). This becomes clearly pronounced in his

introductory verses 'Anirvāchyāvidyā dviteeya sachivasya prabhavato'. He mentions these two avidyās again and again in his Bhāmatī.[51] His frequent mention of these two avidyās takes the repeated form of 'kāryakārana avidyā dvayā'. Both are beginningless. The tulāvidyās form a continuous stream (avasthā ajnānas or model ignorances). Mulāvidyā is a positive (bhāva rūpa), beginningless (anādi) and an indefinite entity (anirdista). It is indefiniable in terms of either real or unreal. It is neither real nor unreal but different from both (sadasat vilakshana). It, in other words, is inexplicable (anirvachaneeya).

Tulāvidya is a series of potencies (vāsanās) of previous confusions. They are the offshoots of Mūlā; vidyā, They are psychological in character. They are various aspects of avidyā working in and through the manifold objects of senses which are removable by the knowledge of the true nature of those objects. In short, they are the concrete forms of mulāvidyā. At the end of creation, they get themselves dissolved in indefinable insentient positive avidyā. They again come to be revived at the next creation of the world appearance and produce the mind-body complexes of empirical selves. During

dissolution the internal organs of the jīvas become merged with the indefinable avidyā and exist with the impressions of confusions as subtle powers.[62]

The tulāvidyās are thus dependent on the mūlāvidyās. And according to Vācaspati, individual delusions are products of these two kinds of avidyā. Mūlāvidyā, in the opinion of Vācaspati, is not the cause of the stream of superimpositions (adhyāsa). Each superimposition is the effect of an earlier superimposition and the stream of indeterminable superimpositions is beginningless.[63] Thus Vācaspati identified mithya-jnāna with adhyāsa. As an answer to the question, what is the cause of superimposition, Vācaspati seems to accept the view of Maṇḍana that each superimposition is the effect of an earlier superimposition ad infinitum.

But Padmapāda splits up mithyā-jnāna into 'mithya' and 'ajnāna' and thus says that primary cosmic ignorance (mūlāvidyā) is the cause of superimposition. This is even justified by the author of the Vivaraṇa who thinks that the above view of Vācaspati commits the fallacy of self-dependence (ātmāshraya). But Maṇḍana and Vācaspati do not

seem to accept this. They point out that one can at best expect non-intelligibility in the case of avidyā; in fact non-intelligibility is the very nature of avidyā.

Thus Vācaspati repeatedly says that prior superimpositions are the cause of subsequent superimpositions. This process is beginningless. Yet there is no reciprocal dependence, because the process is like succession of the seed and the sprout.

Further, if derivative ignorances (tulāvidyās) are sublatable by cognition of the objects to which they refer, primal nescience (mūlāvidyā) is removable only by the knowledge of the supreme reality. Till then it positively persists resulting in particularisation. Vācaspati postulates even a plurality of mūlāvidyās as opposed to the Vivaraṇa school, according to which mūlāvidyā is one only, the destruction of which brings liberation.

Now, it cannot be argued that what is existent can never be removed. For avidyā is neither existent nor non-existent but different from both. It is mithyā in this technical sense and bondage born of avidyā is also mithyā. Right knowledge can certainly remove the false notion of saṃsāra.[54] Thus, when avidyā is described as bhāvarūpa, it

does not mean that it is real in the sense that Brahman is. It is bhāvarūpa only in the sense that it is not non-existent ('abhāva'); it is not an absolutely fictitious entity like the merest sky flower. Though it is beginningless, it is not eternal like Brahman. It is not coeval with Brahman. It is destroyed at the dawn of Brahman-realisation. In fact according to Advaita vedānta, Brahman is the only positive reality all else other than Brahman being inexplicable (anirvachaneeya).[55] Thus the advaitin's admission of avidyā as a positive entity (bhāva rūpa) does not go against the fundamental thesis of the system that the reality (viz. Brahman) is one without a second. Further it must be said that it is the attribution of positive nature to Avidyā that distinguishes the Advaitins conception of the same from that of the Buddhists.

iv

Avidyā - māyā

Now there is a problem as to whether avidyā and māyā are one and the same or whether they are different from each other. Vācaspati, equates avidyā with māyā. He uses them as almost synonymous terms. Both are simply two terms, which stand for same meaning viz., illogicalness.

Thus Vācaspati does not admit of any distinction between avidyā and māyā. It is otherwise called 'Avyākrta' or Avyakta'. He says that all avyākrtas are avidyās.[56]

Padmapāda is also of the opinion that the material cause of adhyāsa viz. avidyā and the 'avyakrta' (without name and form'), the source of the world are one and the same.[57] But Vidyāraṇya distinguishes between avidyā and māyā. According to him, māyā is different from avidyās, that the former is collective and single while the latter are diverse. Again, according to him, in the former the sattva constituent is pure while in the latter it is impure;[58] that Iśvara is the reflection of Brahman in māyā while the jīvas are the reflections of Brahman in avidyā.

V

The locus of Avidyā

Now there is the problem of the seat or locus (āshraya) of avidyā. Avidya or ajñāna, like jñāna is bipolar. It implies some person to whom it belongs and some object to which it refers, just as in the case of shell-silver-illusion, the person who mistakes the shell for silver is the seat (āshraya) of ajnāna and the shell is its object (vishaya). Now, since avidyā, according to Vācaspati, is a positive entity, it must have some locus

and it must refer to something. Then, which is the seat of avidyā Brahman or jīva? Vācaspati's simplistic and straightforward answer to this direct and natural question is that jīva is the locus of avidyā and Brahman is the object or content (vishaya) of avidyā.[59] While commenting on the section 'Samanvayādhikaraṇa' Vācaspati tells that avidyā has jīva as its locus and it is indeterminable. Brahman is always pure.[60] The same view is repeated by, him in his commentary on the section of 'sarvatra prasiddhyādhikaraṇa',[61] Anumānikādhikaraṇa[62] and Vākyānvayadhīkaraṇa.[63] In maintaining this view Vācaspati closely follows Maṇḍana[63(a)] and parts company with Shankara who keeps silent on the question.

This view of Vācaspati, on the locus of avidyā is opposed to the view of the vivaraṇa school which maintains that Brahman is both the locus (āshraya) and object (vishaya) of avidyā.[64] The vivaraṇa school thus does not admit of any difference between the locus and the object of avidyā.[65] Similarly, Sarvajñātman, is of the view that the illusion does not belong to the individual person but is of a transcendental character. It is pure intelligence that shines through all jīvas that is obscured and diversified into a manifold of appearances in a transcendental manner.[66]

Vācaspati is against the view that Brahman is both the locus and content of avidyā. He ~~must~~ gives vent to his dissatisfaction over such an explanation. He exposes every mutual contradiction of the Brahmāshrita avidyā view. He asks the a opponent to look into the śrutis. Since Brahman is declared by the śrutis as self-luminous intelligence as eternally free from bondage, it cannot be the locus of ignorance. Brahman which is pure consciousness, is of the nature of light and hence cannot sustain and support ajnāna, which is of the nature of darkness. According to scriptures, again, Brahman is not a knower (jñātṛ) but knowledge itself (jñāna svarūpa); it is of the nature of pure consciousness (śuddhachaitanya)[67] and hence cannot be the seat of ignorance, which is opposed to its nature and which is temporal as against the eternal principle. Whereas in the case of jīva, illusory knowership due to adhyāsa (super imposition) is admitted, it must be regarded as the seat of avidyā. Only in a knower can ajnāna reside, not in absolute consciousness. Further jīva alone should be the locus of avidyā as it is instructed by the scripture to strive for the removal of avidyā. The experience that 'I am ignorant' suggests that Nescience resides in a jīva. The content of avidyā must be Brahman because knowledge of

Brahman is enjoined by scripture. Thus it is only the jīva that must be regarded as the seat of avidyā — not Brahman contends Vācaspati.[68]

It may be argued that jīva cannot be the locus of avidyā as it itself is a product of nescience. That is to say, one can think of jīva only when one presupposes the prior existence of avidyā, since jīvatva presupposes the prior operation of avidyā. Thus the Vivaraṇa school maintains that jīva cannot be the locus of avidyā inasmuch as the former is a modification of avidyā. To say that jīva is the locus of avidyā is to commit the fallacy of mutual dependence (anyonyāshraya dosha). There is the charge of begging the question. That is, without avidyā, its effect viz., jīva, cannot be explained and without the jīva, avidyā the contained, cannot be explained.[69] Jīva cannot be held as the locus of avidyā since in that case, one will be affirming that nescience itself is the seat of nescience which is absurd, for how can nescience itself reside in it?

Vācaspati refutes the above objection with a hard-hitting reply. The objection is untenable, says Vācaspati, as it is absurd to say that jīva in order to

be the locus of avidyā, is to be preexistent. It is unsound to maintain that jīvatva presupposes the prior operation of avidyā, for they are not interdependent. The interaction of nescience and jīvahood is to be regarded as beginningless like the seed and the sprout — says Vācaspati.[70] Jīva being beginningless (anādi), may be regarded as the substratum of beginningless (anādi) ajnāna. As the learned editors of the Bhāmatī catusutri point out: "The Advaitin (Vācaspati) does not say that at any time avidyā was and the jīva was not or that the jīva was and avidyā was not; the two, on the contrary are beginningless".[71] Thus, in his view there cannot be the defect of mutual dependence as the samyoga is beginningless.

Madhusudana saraswati in his Advaita siddhi defends the jīvāshrita avidyā vāda of Vācaspati. He says that both avidyā and jīva being beginningless, there is no question of interdependency, in their production. The fault of interdependency cannot be ascribed to jīva and avidyā even in their existence, because though avidyā exists in chaitanya and depends on it for its own existence, yet chaitanya i.e., jīva does not depend on avidyā for its existence.[72]

Again the above explanation of Vācaspati may be objected to, on the ground that it is unintelligible. That is, to say that the interaction between nescience and jīva-hood is beginningless like the seed and the sprout, is not to solve the problem.

Vācaspati meets this objection with quite a simple answer. His answer is as simple as it is straightforward. It is futile to expect intelligibility in the case of nescience, since it is the very essence of nescience to be unintelligible in the last resort.[73] It should be noted here that Maṇḍana has given the same answer to the above said problem. He explains away the difficulty by pronouncing that since avidyā is indeterminable, all inconsistencies become meaningful.[74] Thus here Vācaspati closely follows Maṇḍana and replies the objection with Maṇḍana's standard answer.

Thus according to Vācaspati and Maṇḍana, jīva is the locus of avidyā and not Brahman, since from the standpoint of Brahman no avidyā is possible.

Amalānanda, in his Vedāntakalpataru[75] endorses this view of Vācaspati. Prakāshānanda confirms this view of Vācaspati when he says: "The great knowers of the Truth maintain that jīva is the abode of avidyā and that Brahman

is the object of avidyā"[76] Madhusūdana saraswati also agrees with Vācaspati in this respect.[77]

To summarise, if the Bhāmatīkāra is a jīvā-shrita avidyāvādin, the Vivaraṇakāra is a Brahmāshrita avidyāvādin.

vi

Vācaspati seems to be correct in maintaining the view that jīva is the locus of avidyā inasmuch as there must be a common substratum for both vidyā and avidyā. That is, if avidyā (ignorance) belongs to jīva then right knowledge (vidyā) should also belong to him. This squares well with the sound conclusion that knowledge arises in the jīva and that it reveals the true nature of the jīva. This is an advantage over the Vivaraṇa school which maintains the Brahmāshrita-avidyā-vāda, which utterly fails to fulfil this condition.

Sometimes, the Vivaraṇa school tries to explain this inconsistency by maintaining that while Brahman is the locus of avidyā, jīva is the seat of mithyājnāna and thus the removal of mithyājnāna is possible through vidyā or philosophical knowledge. However it must be pointed out that this attempt is extremely illogical as the distinction

drawn between ajnāna and mithyajnāna is unwarranted.[78]

vii

An estimate of Shankara's position

Now, there is a necessity to form a correct idea of Shankara's position regarding the post-shankarites handling of the problem of the locus of Avidyā. On the whole it should be said that much of what the Bhāmatī and the Vivaraṇa schools have said on the problem do not seem to have their roots in Shankara, as he does not admit of single 'yes' or 'no' answers, for he knew that such answers could not do justice to truth. He seems to be of the view that the question, itself is not logically cogent and that the problem of the locus of avidyā is a pseudo problem which takes its rise in the minds of those who fail to rise from the empirical to the transcendental. The question is meaningless in view of the fact that it itself, is an expression of avidyā. It is futile to magnify the problem of the locus of avidyā inasmuch as avidyā is just an empirico-epistemological postulate, and not an ontological principle, that being Brahman alone. As G.R. Malkani aptly puts it, how can an essentially unreal entity have a real lodgement.[79] The ontological principle, viz., Brahman, as it is

non-epistemic, can never be obscured. It is likely that the failure to grasp the relative status of avidyā is the main root of all the objections to the concept of avidyā, from Bhāskara, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Dvaita. "The ontological Absolutism on which Advaita metaphysics rests, gives least scope for the criticisms levelled against the locus of avidya."[80] That is why to the question 'To whom does avidyā belong'? Shankara gives a cryptic reply that it belongs to the questioner and none else.[81]

Shankara thus conceives the idea of making the right approach to philosophy by conceding primacy to absolutistic ontology, subordinating the relativistic epistemology to it. He stands up to vindicate the truth that any departure from the ontological point of view would disrupt all philosophical speculations.

But, in the Bhāmatī , and the Vivaraṇa schools, the problem of the locus of avidyā, gave rise to, as we have already seen, polemics and meaningless arguments and counter arguments. Needless to add that these polemics are least favourable to self-realisation. That is why Shankara wisely avoids the discussion of the theoretical problems connected

with the locus avidyā. Thus it should be asserted here that Shankara refuses to be drawn into the position of the post-Shankarites.

viii

Avidyā — One or many?

Now we are confronted with the problem whether avidyā is one or many. Maṇḍana, though the earlier thinker to propound jīvāshrita avidyā view, is not clear whether avidyā is single or many; he is also not clear whether or not a specific jīva is the seat of a specific avidyā. But Vācaspati is very explicit on this issue. According to him, avidya is not one, but many. He is the advocate of the plurality of even mulavidya. In his view, it is avidyās that explain the apparent difference between the innumerable jīvas. There are as many mulavidyās as there are jīvas;[82] one avidyā for each jīva. This, infact, is the most distinctive feature of Vācaspati's version of Advaita.

Mūlāvidyā cannot be regarded as one only, common to all the jīvas — argues Vācaspati,[83] for in that case if avidyā is removed by right knowledge, there would be simultaneous release for all the jīvas. This would thus lead to the absurd position of 'Eka muktau sarvamukta

prasanga' (if one jīva is liberated all other jīvas, on that account are also automatically liberated).[83(a)] This, however, is not the case. If Caitra removes his avidyā by right knowledge, he comes to be released from the clutches of saṁsāra, but Maitra whose avidya has not been removed continues to be in bondage. Thus to remove the above said difficulty, Vācaspati advocates a plurality of avidyās, (aneka-avidyā-vāda) according to which there exist as already said, innumerable avidyās; one avidyā for each jīva; each jīva has its own particular avidyā with the removal of which that particular jīva comes to be released. Vācaspati clearly says that one's knowledge does not contradict anotherb nescience.[83(b)] To repeat, if chaitra is released with the removal of his own particular avidyā, Maitra continues to be in bondage till his avidyā is removed by right knowledge. Hence there should exist a plurality of mūlāvidyaā — contends Vācaspati.

Here attention should be drawn to one specific point. Though Vācaspati does not actually use the word 'Mūla' in his postulation of Aneka-Avidyāvāda, it implies and should imply 'mūlavidyā' only inasmuch as it is only the postulation of a plurality of mūlāvidyās that can satisfactorily explain, as already seen, the distinction

between the bound and the released. If there exists only one 'mūlāvidya' common to all the jīvas, then no jīva can be actually free until all the other jīvas [illegible] [illegible] realise their perfection. Thus the ideal of moksha, on such a view remains unattained by any jīva.

Further Vācaspati opines that even the sāṁkhya philosophers are compelled by their own inherent logic to accept 'aneka-avidyā-vāda;' for if pradhāna of the sāṁkhya philosophers could be destroyed by knowledge, then everything would be destroyed; if not nothing would be destroyed with the result that liberation itself becomes impossible. To overcome this difficulty, the sāṁkhya philosophers therefore say, that it is non-discrimination between purusha and prakṛti (aviveka) (which is ignorance or avidyā) that is the cause of bondage and 'purusha-prakṛti-vivekajñāna' (knowledge of discrimination between purusha and prakṛti) liberates purusha from the clutches of prakṛti. If that is the case where is the propriety to postulate pradhāna, as avidyā itself is sufficient to explain bondage and release? — Vācaspati asks. Vācaspati further says that it is figurative to call 'avyākṛta' or 'avyakta' (which he equates with avidyā) as one; in reality, they are many.[84]

This criticism of samkhya by Vācaspati implies; (i) that it is avidyā which is neither real nor unreal but different from both (sadasatvilakshana) that binds the jīva, with the removal of which the jīvas comes to be liberated; (ii) and that avidyās are many. Thus according to Vācaspati, avidyā differs from jīva to jīva. It is positive and specific to each jīva. Its nature is such that it cannot be said to be either different or non-different from the jīva — opines Vācaspati.[85]

This remarkable and unique view of Vācaspati is opposed to the view of the Vivaraṇa school, according to which avidyā is/only one[86] and not many. It is common to all the jīvas. But it has different capacities (viśiṣṭa saktis) to bind every jīva. When a particular jīva is released, only that particular capacity of avidyā to bind the jiva is lost, not the whole of nescience (avidya); it persists for other jīvas.[87] Hence the continuation of bondage for the other jīvas. Thus the Vivaraṇakara thinks that there is no need to postulate a plurality of avidyās in order to overcome the absurd position of 'Eka muktau sarvamukta prasanga', for even on Eka avidyāvāda (single Nescience theory) such an absurd position could be easily avoided as explained above. It thus

seeks to reconcile the singleness of avidyā with the plurality of the jīvas.

This view is not acceptable to Vācaspati. It can be criticised as follows: It is unsatisfactory as it is difficult to see how a śakti (potency) can be destroyed without affecting the possessor of it, as śakti and the possessor are essentially non-different, as in the case of fire and burning power.[88] To remove the burning power from fire is to remove fire itself. Thus the 'Eka Avidyā vāda' fails to explain the distinction between the bound and the released.

The view that there is single avidyā can be criticised yet on one more ground viz., experience. If the experiences of individual jīvas are products of a single avidyā then all the jīvas must be having the same experiences. But this is not really the case. Chaitra does not feel, Maitra's pain as his own. The poison drunk by chaitra will not remove the life of Maitra. This means that there is no common organism amongst individuals. Thus there should exist a plurality of avidyās and that they should differ from individual to individual.[89]

Thus the postulation of a plurality of avidyās seems to be more satisfactory as it is simpler also; each avidyā binds a particular jīva with the destruction of which that particular jīva comes to be released. Vācaspati would even say that if the earlier Advaitins talk of one avidyā, they have in their minds, the generality of avidyā ('avidyā-hood') and not that there exists a single avidyā, common to one and all.[90] Needless to say that this interpretation points to the inescapable influence of Nyāya on Vācaspati. Thus Vācaspati maintains that avidyās are innumerable, each differing from every other.

ix

Vācaspati's doctrine of many avidyās, it must be said, is not freedom difficulties. If the plurality of avidyās is postulated by Vācaspati, to show the distinction between the released and the bound a further difficulty would arise. In that case it would be difficult to determine the priority of avidyā and the difference between the jīvas. That is, only when jīvas are established to be many, it follows that avidyās are many; reciprocally only when avidyās are determined to be many, the plurality of jīvas stands established. It is a clear case of reciprocal dependence and hence the arugment is defective.

Vācaspati, again, on the analogy of the beginninglessness of seed and sprout says that there is no defect of reciprocal dependence and that the argument is sound.[90(a)] Avidyā belongs to the jīva and since jīvas are many, avidyās must also be regarded as many.

Again there is another difficulty. If it is avidyā that distinguishes one jīva from the other and if avidyās are many, then does it not mean that avidyās are something real and that the difference between one jīva and the other is also real? Does this not go against the inexplicability (anirvachaneeyatva) of avidyā?[91] To the question as to how the avidyā of one jīva differs from that of the other, it is urged that there is no more satisfactory answer forthcoming than that they differentiate themselves. Does not Vācaspati appear to be a victim of his own fascination and overenthusiasm in postulating a plurality of avidyās though it enables him to state his version of Advaita simply, directly and clearly? Though there seems to be no clear cut answers in Bhāmatī to the above mentioned questions, there is nothing wrong in expecting that Vācaspati would have said a clear 'No'. He cannot admit that the difference between the jīvas is either real or unreal; it on

the otherhand is simply inexplicable (anirvachaneeya). Thus the postulation of a plurality of avidyās by Vāčaspati does not go against the fundamental tenet of the system that the jīva is none other than Brahman in its essence. Yet it should be strictly noted that Vāčaspati does not always adhere to the doctrine of plurality of avidyās.[92]

X

Philosophical implications of the different views on the locus of avidyā

To take up the task of enquiring into the philosophical implications of the different views on the problem of the locus of avidyā. The different views on the problem may be summarised as under: (i) Jīvāshrita-Brahmavishayaka-Avidyāvāda, put forward by Mandana in his Brahma siddhi; (ii) Aneka-jīvāshrita-Brahmavishayaka-Aneka-Avidyā-vāda, strongly advocated by Vāčaspati in his Bhāmati; (ii) Brahmāshrita-Brahmavishayaka-Eka-Avidyāvāda propounded by the Vivarana School (iv) Eka-jivāshrita-Ekaavidyāvāda as propounded and fully developed by Prakāshānanda in his Vedānta-siddhānta-muktāvali. Of these views the second and third may be regarded as stages leading to the gradual evolution and development of the highly speculative Drsti-Srsti vāda and the fourth as the logical culmination of the second and the third finally ending up in the extreme form of Drsti Srsti

vāda or the Vedāntic solipsism of Prakāshānanda.

The view that Brahman is both the locus and the content of avidyā (Brahmāshrita-Brahmavishayaka-bhinnāvaranaśaktika-Eka-avidyāvāda) should be interpreted as landing itself in solipsism inasmuch as Brahman, on this view, through its own avidyā, seems to be bound as it were, and through its own knowledge seems to be released as it were. Thus though it is in prakāshānanda that solipsism, in the long run, finds its culimination, it has its source in the Brahmashrita-Brahmavishayaka-Eka-Avidyā-vāda of the Vivaraṇa school.[93]

It should also be noted here that Vācaspati's Aneka-jīvāshrita-Brahmavishayaka-Anekaavidyāvāda may also be interpreted as hinting at solipsism. It may be regarded as representing the elementary stage in the evolution and development of Vedāntic solipsism as under: According to Vācaspati, avidyās, to repeat, are many and they are located in many jīvas. There are innumerable avidyās, one avidyā for each jīva. Avidyā of every jīva differs from the avidyā of every other jīva. And since avidyā is regarded by Vācaspati as the transformatory cause of the universe, there should exist innumerable universes, each jīva creating its own personal

universe through its own personal avidyā. This means that there is no one sṛṣṭi (creation) common to all the jīvas; each perceiver has his own private personal world (sṛṣṭi). It is exclusively limited to him; it can have no apprehension of the world of the other jīva. As long as one's avidyā continues, so long does the world exist for oneself. The private and personal world, created by each jīva through its own avidyā, vanishes the moment its avidyā is removed by right knowledge (vidyā). For instance, a jīva say (J_1), creates its own private universe (W_1), through its own avidyā(a_1). Similarly the jīvas like J_2, J_3, J_4 ...etc., creating their own private universes like W_2, W_3, W_4 ...etc through their own avidyās like a_2, a_3, a_4 ... etc., $J_1J_2J_3J_4$ etc are different from each other; so are $W_1W_2W_3W_4$ etc. inasmuch as they ($J_1J_2J_3J_4$ etc.) are the loci of different avidyās (a_1, a_2, a_3, a_4, etc.). Thus according to this view there exist countless universes arising out of countless avidyās, seated in countless jīvas. This is in no way different from the vedāntic solipism (Dṛṣṭi-Sṛṣṭi vāda) as propounded by Prakāshānanda. Thus both Brahmāshrita-Brahma-vishayaka-Eka avidyā-vāda and Anekajīvāshrita-Brahmavishayaka-aneka-avidyavāda ultimately end up in Dṛṣṭi-Sṛṣṭi vāda.

Ekajīvāshrita-Eka-avidyā-vāda, again lands itself in radical solipsism. According to it, There is only one jīva (Brahman) with only one avidyā and the notion of all other jīvas is only an illusion or dream of that single jīva which has not yet been released. When it is released, the whole world ceases to exist; but till then, the single jīva continues to have the illusons of the so called other jīvas; it creates in its imagination, the other jīvas, the distinction between the teacher and the taught, the bound and the released etc., Thus according to this theory, all other jīvas and the phenomena including Iśvara are simply the figments of the imagination of that single jīva. The single avidyā of the single jīva veils, maintains Prakāshānanda, from it the essential truth of its being and projects a universe full of diversity.[94]

Now a specific point may be established. Aneka-jīvāshrita-Brahmavishayaka-Anekaavidyāvāda, in the ultimate analysis turns out, it may be safely said, to be Eka-jīvā-shrita Eka-avidyā-vāda, inasmuch as, the former establishes no satisfactory relation between the universe of one jīva (which is due to its own avidyā) and the universe of the other. Each jīva thus preoccupies entirely with itself and its subjective private universe. So in the end this

theory leaves us with nothing more than single jīva and its avidyā. Thus aneka-jīvāshrita-aneka-avidyā-vāda in the end, is simply Eka-jīvāshrita-Eka-avidyāvāda. Aneka-jīvāshrita-aneka-avidyā-vāda, thus means to be decorative adoring the letter-heads. It must be said that Vācaspati unconsciously welcomes and sanctifies 'Ekajīvāshrita-Eka-avidyā-vāda. This leaves the serious reader of Bhāmatī puzzled, to say the least.

Thus it must be said that Vācaspati was logically compelled to end up in Eka-jivāshrita-Ekaavidyā-vāda which has been already shown to be the final stage of the radical vedāntic solipsism (Dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭi vāda). Vācaspati, in this sense provides the source and inspiration for the radical solipsism of Prakāshānanda who seems to have been lured by the loaves of the doctrine. However there is one point of difference between the two. If Ekajīvāshrita-Eka-avidyā-vāda is itself radical solipsism, Vācaspati's aneka-jīvāshrita-aneka-avidyā-vāda only leads to solipsism; it is just a link in the evolution of vedāntic solipsism.

In conclusion, we may repeat that Dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭivāda has its visible roots in both Aneka-jīvāshrita-Brahmavishayaka aneka-avidyāvāda and Brahmāshrita Brahma-vishayaka-Eka-avidyā-vāda, of which Prakāshānanda is the inheritor. It is but

It is but the logical culmination of both the theories. This is the view of Madhusūdana Sarasvati as well. In his siddhānta Bindu he writes: "The prototype intelligence conditioned by ignorance is Iśvara and intelligence reflected in ignorance is the jīva; pure intelligence unconditioned by ignorance is Iśvara, what is conditioned by ignorance is the jīva; either of these, as the principal conclusion of the Vedānta, is what is called the Ekajīvavāda. It is this that they call Dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭi vāda.[95]

This is only one possible interpretation. Every theory has a tendency to invite more than one interpretation The other interpretation is that of Brahmānanda in his commentary on Siddhānta Bindu. The central theme of it will be enunciated in later portions of this chapter.

XII

Dṛṣṭi - sṛṣṭi vāda

The Dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭi vāda may be elaborated. According to the extreme form of Dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭi vāda as propounded by prakāshānanda, what is generally characterised as an external reality and as an object of apprehension is really an internal one and an apprehension itself.[96] The object, according to this view is not the locus of knowledge. Knowledge is eternal

as it persists always; it does not require the presence of an object. Nor can it be supposed that the object produces consciousness, for consciousness is ever present. So the presence of object is superfluous, argues Prakāshānanda. As an instance he cites the knowledge of the internal kind, which takes its birth even in the absence of the object.[97] Even the elephant of waking experience is not an object of sense-sight; it is as good as a dream elephant.[98] There is no difference whatsoever between waking and dream experience. Thus to a solipsist, the worldly existence is a pure subjective illusion. We can trace this to such an earliest thinker as Gaudapāda.[99] There is no objective datum and each jīva creates for himself his own illusion; the jīva independent of Iśvara creates the universe through his own avidyā.[100] Thus according to Prakāshānanda, the self is one and the only ultimate reality; there is no creation of the world. Iśvara, world etc., are the creations of this single jīva. Illusory perception of each happens for him subjectively and has no corresponding objective phenomena as its ground. For instance the pot I see, according to the Dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭi vādin has no existence before I happened to have the perception that there was the pot. As soon as pot-illusion occured to me, I said that there was the pot. Thus

according to this view, phenomena are not objectively existent but are only subjectively imagined; perception is the creation of objects.[101] It exists as it is perceived. It has no other independent existence expect the fact of its perception. It thus denies, existence to the empirical world, independent of apprehension. In short Dṛṣṭi-Sṛṣṭi vada denies extraapprehensional existence. The Berkeleyan principle of 'Esse est percipi' (to be is to be perceived) is also the principle of the Dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭi vādin. In his view creation is simultaneous with perception; the objects do not exist when they are not perceived. Thus this view reduces everything to the status of illusion. To put it in other words, the so called objects are not at all different from the cognitions. The wise regard the world, says Prakāshānanda, as of the nature of cognitions. The deluded persons erroneously think it to be of the nature of objects.[102] The objects of experience are created at the moment when they are perceived and they do not exist before they are perceived. The world is mere cognition our ideas have no objective basis to which they correspond. There is no difference between the seen and the seeing.[103]

Further according to Prakāshānanda nescience (avidyā) is one but it possess manifold powers and hence there exist

manifold universes, just as one flaw of sleep is found to produce various dreams.[104] He maintains that our experience is inexplicably provided under the influence of one avidyā and that beyond that no objective common ground exists.

A cursory view of the above implies that Dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭi vāda has no proper epistemology as the experiences of each person are determined by his own subjective avidyā. In this respect Dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭi vāda approximates to the Vijñāna-vāda of Buddhism. However there is one important difference between the two. If Buddhistic Vijñānavāda does not admit of any permanent being, the Vedāntic solipsism of Prakāśānanda admits of the unchangeable transcendent reality namely Brahman, as the only truth, whereas the illusory reality and momentary perception are but impositions on it.[105]

XII

Sṛṣṭi - Dṛṣṭi vāda

As opposed to Dṛṣṭi Sṛṣṭi vāda, there is a view in Vedānta that the objects of the world are existent as the phenomena. But the sense contact with the phenomena creates subjective perceptions. Though the objective phenomena in themselves are the modifications of avidyā, yet they provide the common ground for the experience of all.

This view is what is called Sṛṣṭi-Dṛṣṭivāda which is the conventional view of creation. Dṛṣṭi according to this view is of the created. And Iśvara creates the world common to all the percipient Jīvas in the stated sequence by the scripture. Creation is thus the result of God's voluntary effort and the universe is thus endowed with non-cognized Reality; that is, the universe has extra-apprehensional existence of its own. In short, if God's is Sṛṣṭi-Dṛṣṭi vāda, Jīva's is Dṛṣṭi-Sṛṣṭi vāda; if the former is of the view that perception is of the created, the latter is of the view that perception is creation.[106]

The Sṛṣṭi-Dṛṣṭi vāda is thus against the radical solipsism of prakāshānanda which seems to ignore the distinction between the bound and the released. By doing so, it ignores, unfortunately the scriptures which declare that certain souls like Vāmadeva, śuka etc., have been released. It is fit to be rejected as it entertains disbelief in scriptures in such supreme matter as moksha.[107]

Further the Dṛṣṭi-Sṛṣṭivāda seems to efface the distinction between pragmatic truth (Vyavahārika sattā) - that is the world, and illusory truth (pratibhāsika sattā) like the illusion of Snake in a rope. All creations - whether the creation of the great mountains or the pitchers are reduced

to the status of an illusion. Thus the Dṛṣṭi-Sṛṣṭivādin makes a mockery of the common sense view of the world with his declaration that all phenomena, including Iśwara is but his own dream. Thus the Dṛṣṭi-Sṛṣṭivādin enthrones the jīva on the highest pedestal and reduces God to nothing. With the admission of Dṛṣṭi-Sṛṣṭi vāda the Advaita Vedānta gets into the 'coma'.

xiii

A comparative estimate

The main points of contrast between Dṛṣṭi-Sṛṣṭi vāda and Sṛṣṭi-Dṛṣṭi vāda may be summarised:

(i) At the outset we should not fail to recognise the common current that flows uniformally in both the views viz their conception of the ultimate reality. Inspite of their relentless conceptual philosophic war with each other, both the vādas agree in saying that Brahman is the highest reality and that it is satchidānanda; there could be no second to it.

(ii) Whether avidyā is one or many, both the camps agree in saying that it is mysterious avidyā that is responsible for the false show of the universe. For both of them, avidyā is an unanalysable utterly purposeless inexplicable non-spiritual entity.

(iii) On both the views, the reality of the world is denied and the illusoriness of the world is admitted, for according to both it is only the illusory that is removable by knowledge and not the real.[108]

(iv) If Sṛṣṭi-Dṛṣṭi vāda is fundamentally simple Dṛṣṭi Sṛṣṭi vāda is extremely complex.

(v) If according to Sṛṣṭi-Dṛṣṭi vāda there is only one world common to all the jīvas, according to Dṛṣṭi-Sṛṣṭi vāda, there is no common ground of experience, as each jīva has its own universe, strictly private and personal.

(vi) If the epistemological stand point of the Sṛṣṭi-Dṛṣṭi Vāda may be described as realistic that of Dṛṣṭi-Sṛṣṭi Vāda, in its extreme form as developed by Prakāshānanda may be called highly idealistic.

(vii) Both the camps clearly distinguish their positions from the Buddhistic Vijnāna vāda, though Dṛṣṭi-Sṛṣṭi vāda may seem to identify itself almost with Vijñāna-vāda of Buddhism.

(viii) If God's is Sṛṣṭi-Dṛṣṭi vāda, jīva's is Dṛṣṭi-Sṛṣṭi vāda.

xiv

The other possible interpretation of Vācaspati's view regarding the locus of avidyā and its implications may now be discussed. According to this interpretation, it is wrong to conclude that Vācaspati's 'Aneka jīvāshrita aneka avidyā vāda' lands itself in radical solipsism of the type of Prakāshānanda. It should be carefully understood as not implying solipsism inasmuch as though jīva, is the locus of avidyā, it is not the controller of avidyā as control is not in its hands, itself being finite. Being themselves the jīvas they cannot create a world full of jīvas like themselves. Therefore the world must be considered to be created by God who is the controller of all avidyas. This is also the interpretation given by Brahmānanda in his commentary on Madhusudana's siddhānta Bindu.[109] As Dr. S. Radhakrishnan says: "While avidyā rests in the individual, it is yet dependent on God who is its agent and object."[110] Hence there should exist the omniscient, omnopotent, omnipresent Iśvara who creates the universe. Iśvara the controller of avidyās located in the jīvas, fashions the world.[111] The jīva is prone to mistake the world created by God as illusory due to its own mysterious and mischievous avidyā; it cannot

by itself create the phenomenal world. Thus if Iśvara may be looked upon as the cause of the empirical would, jīva is the cause of the illusory world.[112]

This, it should be submitted, seems to be the correct and prudent interpretation of Vācaspati's 'aneka jīvāshritaaneka-avidyā vada'. This is further confirmed by Vācaspati with his admission of the externality of an object of perception. In this, he closely follows Shankara. According to him the Sākshin perceives an apprehension as apprehending an external object. This external object cannot be denied as it is different from an internal cognition. More over a cognition cannot cognize itself, as an object since it involves self-contradiction. Therefore it must be admitted that the Sākshin cognizes an object distinct from itself. In other words, there should exist an external object, argues Vācaspati.[113] Thus according to Vācaspati the objects are already existent independent of the perceiver, but only their nature and stuff are indescribable. This is a death blow, Vācaspati gives both to the Buddhistic Vijnānavāda and the Drsti-Srsti vāda.

Now, keeping in view of Vācaspati's doctrine of plurality of avidyās, it may well be argued that God, by controlling the different avidyās in diverse jīvas,

evolves, of course, diverse universes for them. Though the universes are strictly personal, yet every jīva seems to perceive the same universe due to the extreme similarity of the universes. Nor is the demand for a single universe common to all the jīvas imperative since all that is needed is nothing more than some agreement among the participants of illusion. For instance when a number of people mistake in the dark, a rope for a snake, they have the illusion of a snake. They agree in their individual perceptions that they have all seen the same snake though each really had his own illusion. But the agreement among them does not prove the existence of a single objective snake.[114]

It may be further argued on the lines of Leibnitz, that God who creates the diverse universes for the diverse jīvas by controlling their avidyās, has arranged these universes in such a way, that all the jīvas look upon these diverse universes as providing a common ground of experience inasmuch as He is the common content of all avidyās.[114(a)] Further the diverse universes may be looked upon as similar though they differ from individual to individual, just as the bodies of different individuals are similar though different from each other.[115]

XV

Now if, according to this interpretation, the world must be considered to be created by God, by controlling of avidyās in the jīvas, there arises the question of the position of Iśvara. An attempt is sometimes made to show that there is no room for Iśvara in Vācaspati's system of non-dualism. Avacchoda vāda, Vācaspati's pet theory with regard to the nature of jīva, is the alleged basis of such an attempt. It may be explained as under: According to Avacchedavādam, pure intelligence is Brahman; the same defined by different avidyās are the jīvas. If so, where is the room for Iśvara? This seems to be a very legitimate question.

However it must be pointed out that Avacchedavāda is well above such a criticism. In answer to this criticism, it may be said that since Vācaspati has recognised a plurality of avidyās, pure consciousness as defined by diverse nesciences, in their totality, may be regarded as Iśvara; and pure consciousness as defined by diverse nesciences singly, may be regarded as jīva. In that case Iśvara becomes a collective jīva. But such a conception is far from satisfactory from the religious point of view, as it fails to command awe, respect and adoration. The clue to the solution of this problem may be found in ~~Vācaspati~~

Vācaspati's 'anekajīvāshrita-anekavidyā-vāda', which has already been explained. The jīva, being the locus of avidyā is finite, and imperfect. It cannot attribute the characteristics of perfection, omniscience, omnipotence etc., to Brahman as it is pure intelligence (śuddha chaitanya) devoid of all human characterisations. So the jīva comes to relate these characteristics with an embodiment and this embodiment of all perfections may be called Iśvara, which is the common content of all diverse avidyās. Thus though the avidyās are different from each other as also the jīvas, there can be yet a common universe.[116]

Thus Iśvara is more than jīva or a totality of jīvas. It cannot be equated with a collective jīva, for if the collective jīva is logically bound to be under the influence of collective avidyā, Iśvara is the overlord of avidyā. In short, Iśvara is not only the controller of jīvas, but also their avidyās. We have Śruti which supports this contention: "He is the wielder of all the nesciences together"[117]

This becomes further clear in one of the opening verses of Bhāmatī,[118] in which Vācaspati actually offers prayers to God's like Mārtanda Tilakaswāmin, Mahā Ganapati, Āditya etc., He further says that the vedas are the breath of the Lord and regards Veda Vyāsa, the author of the Brahmasūtras

as the incarnation of the cognitive energy of the Lord.[119] When Vācaspati has made obeisance to God in clear and humbler terms, it would be not only utterly ridiculous but even foolish to brand Vācaspati as an athiest. In short there is not even a tinge of atheism in Vācaspati's version of Advaita and he is second to none in his devotion to and admiration of theism. In fact, Amalānanda, Vācaspati's commentator, in his Vedānta kalpataru has left no stone unturned to express and uphold the truth that Vācaspati is a firm believer in Iśwara. He takes the critics to task and his rage subsides only when he calls them, the fools.

Thus Vācaspati's system of Advaita should be characterized as realistic, keeping in view, his insistence on the existence of God and the plurality of jīvas, though in a sense it is idealistic, in so far as the material world cannot be regarded as self-existent.[120] In his view point, the worldly existence, thus is not a subjective creation. God, jīvas etc., are real as long as avidyā is not removed by right knowledge. In this respect Vācaspati has no compunction about joining hands with the Vaiśeṣikas. This is certainly against the radical solipsism of Prakāshānanda that all phenomena including Iśwara is but the figments of imagination of a single jīva. It is also against the view, that perception

is of the creation; it, on the otherhand, is in favour of the view that perception is of the created. Vācaspati, commenting on the Brahmasūtra II,ii.28 confirms this. There he explicitly says that external objects, are already existent outside the perceiver; their nature and stuff are indescribable (anirvachaneeya); they are not mental ideas. This means that our perceptions always refer to objects existing outside of us and that they are not of the nature of pure sensations. In other words, our perceptions are produced by the objects existing outside of us and are not ideas, generated from within, bereft of objects. This faithful interpretation of Shankara by Vācaspati may be taken as supporting the second possible interpretation, of the implications of the problem of the locus of avidyā.[120(a)]

The above interpretation of, the implications of the problem of the locus of avidya, seems to be more sound and as it beautifully accommodates God in Vācaspati's system of non-dualism which has far-reaching consequences. For to accept Dṛṣṭi-Sṛṣṭi vāda is to abolish God and other jīvas, once and for all from the system of non-dualism resulting in the total embrace of radical solipsism. A majority of Advaitins are opposed to such a view. Though God is not the highest reality in Advaita and could be safely dispensed with

from the transcendental point of view (pāramārthika), yet its postulation from the empirical point of view (vyāvahārika) is a necessity for most of the advaitins. One Advaitin may postulate one avidyā, another may postulate a plurality of avidyās. But to say that Advaita from the empirical point of view, could be devoid of Iśvara is to strike at the very root of non-dualism. So long as inexplicable avidyā or avidyās are not removed by right knowledge, the reality of Iśvara is a fact and its existence must be invariably postulated by every postubated by every Advaitin. Vācaspati is no exception to this.

Vācaspati proceeds to establish the omniscience of the Lord not merely on the basis of His being the cause of the universe, but on His being the source of scriptures. Iśvara is omnipotent because He is bodyless; He is omnipotent, since there is no obstacle to His activity. He is not at all subject to bondage. Though both jīva and Iśvara are the product of avidyā, they are not to be equated with each other, for the jīva has a mind-body complex and hence subject to bondage and suffering. Jīva has limited knowledge and power of activity whereas Iśvara has unlimited knowledge. The jīva is embodied and limited by antaḥkaraṇa, etc., Due to avidyā, it undergoes transmigration and suffering. Its knowledge though eternal

is obstructed by avidyā. But the knowledge of the omniscient one, extends to all things; the subject matter of sacred teaching extends to all things.[121] He effects that with very slight effort as if in sport, which the divine sages, even with great effort cannot compass.[122] Iśvara thus possesses more extensive knowledge than the vedas. The vedas may be extensive but their contents are not equal to the knowledge of His, who makes it. Thus Vācaspati concludes: Iśvara, the greatest being is the source of the Vedas, possesses unsurpassed omniscience and omnipotence.[123] He creates the vedas not afresh, but in accordance with what they were in earlier creations.[124] He reveals the vedas and they are worthy of faith since he possesses knowledge of the truth and is free from all defects unlike the ignorant. Iśvara is Brahman, with the adjunct of avidyā. He is the creator of eternal values. In this he associates himself with beginningless nescience.[125] The determinate qualities of Iśvara are due to the limiting adjuncts and are superimposed on Brahman. It serves the purpose of meditation and prayer. His nature can be ascertained through the faith of prajāpati and the devine sages who existed at the first creation, who possess virtue, wisdom, non-attachment and lordly power in abundance.[126] Through their faith follows the faith of the later ones. Thus

Iśwara, according to Vācaspati is the sacred source of the sacred teaching.

Iśwara, further says Vācaspati, is never a saṁsārin (one who is in bondage); he is free from avidyā, body and bondage. He is not under the control of avidyā,[126(a)] unlike the jīva. He is ever liberated. He is free from all sensuous love (rāga) and aversion (Dvesha). In accordance with the past karma of each jīva, he moves it to do a particular act.[127] He is just a karmādhyaksha, one who presides over karma. He just supervises the operation of the law of karma in accordance with which he allots, rewards and punishments to the jīvas at appropirate time and place. The happiness and misery, which the jīvas undergo, are in strict conformity with their own past karma. He cannot therefore be charged with partiality, opines Vācaspati.[128] He cannot be held to be the sole determining agent. Iśwara, in other words, is not ruthless and favourable to a chosen few as he has no hatred towards any-body just as a magician has no hatred towards his magic creation of things. The creation of the world is just sport and there is no mean motive behind it. It is mere 'leela'. Restoration and preservation of moral balance is the motive behind Iśwara in creating the world. He is the inner controller, the ultimate guarantor of moral values.

Creation of the world is not even by yadrccha or chance, maintains Vācaspati. The world cannot have as its cause, one who is not omniscient and omnipotent. It is so because, his knowledge and capacity would then be limited. Hence he cannot know and produce the universe. The He cannot even conceive of the design of the world. When his mind is unable to conceive of the design of a single body, it is foolish to think that he can conceive of the design of the whole universe — contends Vācaspati.[129]

Thus according to Vācaspati, Iśvara, from the empirical stand point, is both the efficient and material cause of the world, (abhinna nimittopādāna)[130] and hence He is both immanent and transcendent. He is in the world, yet beyond it. He is greater than the world he has created.

This view is opposed to the view of the systems like Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, yoga, Dvaita etc., which maintain that Iśvara is only an efficient cause of the universe. Vācaspati severely criticizes such a view. To maintain such a view, Vācaspati points out, is to throw doubts upon the omniscience and omnipotence of God; for in that case Iśvara, will have to be at the mercy of matter (prakṛti). Matter thus gets elevated to the status of an independent reality and Iśvara will never be

in a position to create the world in accordance with his own will. That is, this view makes Iśvara depend upon matter in His act of creation thereby divesting God from all his omnipotence. He cannot then be regarded as a self-determining God; he comes to be viewed as one amongst finite individuals. Hence it is impossible, Vācaspati contends, to think of Iśvara as only the efficient cause of the world.[131] All this is against the contention that there is no room for Iśvara in Vācaspati's system of non-dualism and that jīva himself is the creator of the world. Hence it deserves to be rejected.

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CHAPTER - VII

NATURE OF MOKSHA AND THE MEANS THEREFOR

According to Advaita Vedānta, as for all other systems of Indian Philosophy, excepting the Chārwāka, moksha is the be-all and the end-all of all human endeavour. It is the highest goal (summum bonum) to be reached, It means self-realisation (Ātma sākshātkāra). It consists, in the jīva realising its own true nature — that it is none other than the infinite, eternal, deathless and birthless satchidānanda. It thus means putting an end to the cycle of birth and death. Freedom from rebirth is its sure sign. In short, it means freedom from all empirical limitations and suffering.

The discussion of the concept of Moksha presupposes the state of relative bondage of the jīva. Unless the jīva is in bondage, the question of its striving to realise its own true nature does not arise at all. The jīva, though Brahman in its essence, due to beginningless inexplicable nescience (anādi, anirvacaneeya avidyā) forgets, as it were its own true nature and comes to imagine that it is finite, little knowing, and a useless creature (kshudra jantu). Hence it undergoes all misery and suffering. Thus the suffering of the jiva, in the ultimate analysis is due to the failure to know the true nature of itself. It, in other

words, is due to false knowledge (mithya jñāna). It can be removed only by right knowledge of the self (vidyā). Like Shankara, Vācaspati is never tired of saying that jñāna and jñāna alone is the means to Moksha.

2

Vācaspati's views on the place of Karma in the scheme of Advaitic sādhana, may now be discussed.

Mandana and Vācaspati are one of the view that karma has a part to play in the scheme of sādhana by giving rise to the desire to have Jñāna (knowledge) for Moksha.[1] This view is repeated by him in his Bhāmatī on the aphorism 'Sarvatāpi ca ta eva ubhayalingam'[2]. Karma, in this sense, in the view of Vācaspati, is a means of the means to moksha i.e., jñāna. He is of the view that the desire to know can be brought about by practising ritual and this in due course fulfils itself through knowledge and release.

Vācaspati, actually deals with the stages in the functioning of rituals towards the desire to jñāna (knowledge). From the a observance of obligatory rites, merit is generated, with the rise of which sin, which

[redacted]

makes the intellect improve through errors of the nature of cognition of eternity, purity etc., in a saṁsāra, ceases. The obligatory rites thus destroy incurred sin and thereby purifies the person. With the cessation of sin, opens the door of perception and reasoning resulting in the aspirant's knowing of the impermanence, impurity misery etc., of saṁsāra. Then arises renunciation consisting of non-attachment thereto; then grows the desire to remove it; hearing that knowledge of the true nature of the self is the means to be sought, one desires to know that. He reflects on it, reasons about it, refutes all objections levelled against it. Finally he starts contemplating the supreme Brahman. When this meditation is continued uninterruptedly with devotion for a long time, then one comes to 'know' it.[3] He gets the intuition of the supreme intelligence that is beyond all duality and misery. This intuition destroys nescience and its products. The spirit then shines in its own true nature. Thus, in the view of Vācaspati, rituals are contributory to the desire to know Brahman. They bring about the purity of mind and thus prepare the ground, for the rise of Brahmajñāna, the highest knowledge.

There are two varieties of contributories or auxiliaries. (i) Proximate and (ii) remote. A remote

auxiliary (Ārādupakāraka) is what subserves a distant fruit; on the other hand, what subserves a rite directly is a proximate contributory (sannipatya or samavāyika-upakāraka); For instance, the material used in conducting ritualistic acts. Thus if the remote auxiliary subserves the fruit directly, not the rite, the proximate contributory subserves the rite and indirectly the fruit. And Vācaspati's view is that the rituals are remote auxiliaries. This is distinctive to Vācaspati.

Thus according to Vācaspati ritualistic action is useful only to create in man the desire to know Brahman (Vividishanti), through the purification of sattva (intellect). As an authority Vācaspati quotes srutis.[4] Mundaka text declares: "Being of purified intellect, he then sees the partless (Brahman) through contemplation". He also quotes the Brihadāranyaka text: 'Tametam Vedānu-vacanena Brahmana Vividishanti yajnena dānena tapasā-nāshakena' (Brahmanās desire to know Him (Brahman) through the study of the Vedas, by sacrifice, by charity, a by austerity and by fasting)[5] This text Vācaspati says, clearly tells us that sacrifice etc., are enjoined as subsidiaries to the desire to know and not as a means to the knowledge of Brahman; it is very particular in saying that they (Brāhmanās) desire to know

(vividishanti) and not that they actually do know (vidanti). Further in the Śruti there is tṛteeya vibhakti, which points to some 'means.' Means to what? Vācaspati replies: means to vividisha. In vividisha, jñāna and 'jnana-iccha' are there in the form of 'dhatu'. In this, karma is a means to the desire to know Brahman. This is so, Vācaspati argues because, in a word which is a combination of the suffix (pratyaya) and the root (prakṛti), the former is primary as compared to the latter which is subsidiary. Hence the meaning implied by the suffix is more important than that of the root. In the above quoted text, since desire forms the meaning of the suffix, the term 'vividishanti' should be interpreted to mean 'they desire to know'. Though in fact knowledge is primary as compared with the desire therefor, yet says Vācaspati, since in the word, it is the meaning of the stem, as compared with the suffix, it is subsidiary, while desire being the meaning of the suffix is primary. And it is obvious that activity relates to what is primary; as for instance, the statement 'Bring the king's man'. When one says, 'Bring the king's man one is not expected to bring the king on the ground that he is primary. On the other hand, though

the king is primary, in fact, is yet subsidiary in the word as the qualification of "man". Thus, of sacrifice, as of the study of the veda, there is prescription as the means to desire (vividisha sādhana).[6] Thus karma is a remote aid for the rise of the desire to acquire the highest knowledge.

Thus, Vācaspati seems to carve out for karma, a distinctive place in the scheme of sādhana by regarding it as very essential to arouse the desire to have the knowledge of Brahman. By maintaining this view he clearly distinguishes himself from the Vivaraṇa School.

3

The Vivaraṇa school holds that rituals are contributory to knowledge itself and not merely to the desire to know.[7] That is, the performance of the ritual(karma) is a means, not to create desire to have knowledge of Brahman, but a means to have the knowledge of Brahman itself (vedana sādhana). In his vivaraṇa and also in his 'śareeraka nyāya samgraha' he affirms this view.[8] If, Vācaspati makes a distinction between icchā (desire) & icchā vishaya and holds iccha and more dominant than icchā vishaya, the Vivaraṇa school stresses more on pratyayatha.

To summarise: If Vācaspati maintains the view that karma is conducive to vividisha, the vivarana school maintains the view that karma is conducive not to vividisha but to vidyotpāda.

Further, the Vivarana holds that the performance of rituals will have potency which persists till the knowledge of Brahman is obtained. But according to Vācaspati the performance of rituals may be stopped as soon as it results in creating the desire to have the knowledge of Brahman.[9] In other words, performance of rituals is not a potency which persists till the knowledge of Brahman is obtained. Thus the value of ritualistic action is exhausted by the arousal of desire to know Brahman. It is here that Vācaspati differs from Mandana in so far as the latter emphasizes upon the continuation of karma even after the rise of the desire to know Brahman. That for Vācaspati, karma is a remote auxiliary (ārādupakāraka), distinguishes the Advaitic position from that of the mīmāmsakas who hold that karma is a means to the highest good. Vācaspati is emphatic in saying that in the ultimate sense, jñāna alone in the sole means to self-realisation.

In maintaining the view that karma is conducive to 'vividisha' Vācaspati seems to have the support of Shankara.

Shankara says that the prescribed rites like yajnas etc., are intended to serve the preliminary purpose of preparing the mind, by generating the desire to know (vividisha) and thus helping the aspirant in acquiring the knowledge of Brahman.[10] And Shankara is bent on saying that jnāna and jnāna alone is the means to moksha.

4

Vācaspati's interpretation of the role of karma in sādhana as consisting in creating the mere desire to know Brahman (vividishā) can be criticised. On the face of it, it looks untenable for, the desire to know, is not verily determined in the absence of what is to be desired. The desire to know, primarily needs an object alone, as it is bound up with the attainment of the knowledge of Brahman. Thus the desire to know is not determined in the absence of what is desired to be known. Thus Vācaspati is not justified in making the secondary, primary and the primary, secondary. Further, the means which gives us the object of desire is nobler and stronger than the means, which is only a means to create the desire to have knowledge of Brahman.

To this possible objection, Vācaspati would reply by saying that knowledge is bound up with the attainment of the desire; and for knowledge, what is to be known is Brahman.

It is none of our concern as to which means is stronger; we should look into the śruti: 'Tametam vedānuvacanena Brāhmaṇa vividishanti yagnena dānena tapasā nāśakena' — Vācaspati would say. In it, there is pratyayārtha. There, 'iccha' is dominant and hence karma has to be regarded as a means to the desire to know Brahman, Vācaspati contents.

8

Vācaspati's view, that karma is a remote aid for the rise of the desire to acquire the highest knowledge does not however mean, that he allows the combination of jñāna and karma (Jñāna-Karma-Samucchaya) as a means to moksha. Vācaspati though follows the Maṇḍana's lead, includes the latter's view on karma in the pūrvapaksha and refutes it later by supporting Shankara's view point. Maṇḍana is definitely in favour of a particular type of Samucchaya.[11] He is favourably disposed to Samyoga-prthaktva paksha or the principle-of-two-in-oneness, according to which, all the karmas prescribed in the karmakānda of the veda, serve two functions. Firstly they enable the aspirant to reach the desired goal like heaven; secondly, they also aim at self-realisation as there is the scriptural statement: "Him the Brahmanas

seek to know by the study of the veda, by sacrifices".[12] The scriptural statement declares that karma is subsidiary to knowledge. Thus samyoga-pṛthaktva explains the relation between karma and knowledge in terms of the principle of two-in-oneness. It is samyoga-pṛthaktva in the sense that one principle serves two ends. It is in this sense that Maṇḍana regards karma as a means to moksha as it helps the aspirant to contemplate on the meaning of the scriptural statement by constant repetition (abhyāsa) of the same. And in the view of Maṇḍana the means to moksha (i.e., jnāna-karma-samuccaya) consists in the combination of repeated contemplation (abhyāsa) of the indirect knowledge of the secondless absolute derived from the upanishadic śabda and also the ritualistic discipline of the prescribed yajnas and such other rites.[13] Maṇḍana quotes in support of his view, the Brahmasūtra: "Sarvāpeksha ca yajnādi-shruterashvavāt".[14] Thus according to samyoga-pṛthaktva karmas are conducive, not only to their respective fruits, but also to the realisation of the self.

Vācaspati refutes this view in his Bhāmatī.[15] Samyoga-pṛthaktva, says he, is unjustifiable because of prolixity. To quote his exact words: "It is settled that obligatory rites destory incurred sin and thereby purify the person; when the subsidiariness of obligatory rites to

the generation of knowledge is thus intelligible, it is not proper to make out direct subsidiariness by the principle of two-in-oneness (samyoga-pṛthaktva), as that would lead to prolixity of assumptions."[16]

Thus, Vācaspati, like Shankara, goes all out, to show the utter untenability of jnāna-karma samucchaya. Shankara is of the categorical view that karma has no place in the means of self-realisation.[17] Sureshwara severely criticises jnāna-karma samucchaya vada.[18] Along with Shankara and sureshwara, Vācaspati admits that karma has only a preparatory role to play in purifying the mind of the aspirant by creating the desire to have moksha. When this purpose is served w all the ritualistic activities vanish like wintermist. We may draw attention here to one specific point. The main reason for such an uncompromising rejection of karma as a means to moksha is to keep up the independent spirit of Advaita against the Mīmamsakas. Vācaspati has this very good reason for taking this stand. He has no patience with those who preach and advocate jnāna-karma samucchaya vāda. It cannot be maintained, says Vācaspati that there is need of ritual for contemplation in in respect of intuition of Brahman, for co-operation with

ritual is unintelligible, since there is no copresence of contemplation and the observance of ritual.[19] Karma implies the distinction between agent and enjoyment and hence belongs to the realm of avidyā. They cannot coexist as they are mutually exclusive. It is here that Vācaspati parts company with Maṇḍana. He has no hesitation, here, to deviate from Maṇḍana though, his aim was to retain, asmuch as possible of his heritage from Maṇḍana and to read it into the non-dualism of Shankara.

6

Vācaspati's distinctive interpretation of 'Sādhana catuṣṭaya'

According to Shankara, the seeker after truth, must be supposed to be, already in possession with four characteristics. They are: (1) the ability to distinguish between the eternal and the non-eternal (nityānityavastu-vivekaḥ), (2) the renunciation of the desire to enjoy sensual pleasures in this and in the other world (ihāmutrārthabhogavirāgaḥ), (3) The cultivation of virtues like restraint of mind and body, withdrawing the senses from objects of desire, fortitude, concentration and so forth (śamadamādi-sādhana-sampat) and (4) The desire for release (mumukṣutva). These four, in their togetherness, are known as 'sādhana catuṣṭaya', which , according to Shankara, is

the prerequisite to the study of Vedānta. Only he who possesses these characteristics becomes eligible to know the vedāntic truth.

To take up the first characteristic. In the view of Shankara, the discrimination between the eternal and the non-eternal is that condition, in the absence of which, there would be no desire to know Brahman and in the presence of which the desire becomes certainly existence. What is special in Vācaspati' interpretation of 'nityānityavastu vivekaḥ' is that the discrimination between the two, viz., the eternal and the non-eternal, is not of the nature of certitude, for, in that case, Brahman being already known the desire to know Brahman, becomes superfluous. That is, according to Vācaspati, what is eternal is not already known as distinct from what is non-eternal; fro for in that case there can be no further enquiry. In fact, 'nityānityavastu vivekaḥ', it may be argued, becomes possible only after one has made a a study of Vedānta and as such it cannot be a prerequisite to the study of vedānta. Hence the discrimination between the eternal and the non-eternal is not of the nature of certitude — asserts Vācaspati. Nor is it of the nature of doubt, for that cannot bring about non-attachment; hence that cannot be the cause of the desire to know Brahman. Now it may be asked: if, according to Vācaspati

the discrimination between the two — the eternal and the non-eternal — is neither of the nature of certitude nor of doubt, what else is it? Vācaspati replies this question by saying, that it is but the apprehension of difference between substrates in general, as also between their attributes, as eternal and non-eternal., i.e., it only means the distinction of eternality from non-eternality, the discrimination of the attributes, which are indeed called 'vastu', as they dwell therein — points out he. To elaborate, it means the discrimination between that which is to be rejected and that which is to be accepted. To put it more precisely, to be eternal is to be true, that in which this is found is eternal and it is therefore to be accepted (āsthāgocara); to be non-eternal is to be untrue; that in which this is found is non-eternal and is thus to be rejected (anāsthāgocara). That which is established to be true, eternal and pleasant, that comes in the sphere of desire; that is to be given up, which becomes non-eternal, untrue encompassed by three fold misery.[19A] Thus according to Vācaspati the knowledge of eternality and non-eternality is linked up with the knowledge of desirability and non-desirability. That much of knowledge, is enough to account for, both non-attachment and the desire to know Brahman.

Vācaspati says that, this discrimination of things, eternal and non-eternal comes to him, whose intellect has been purified by the rites performed whether in a prior existence or in this one, as shown by experience and reasoning.[19(b)] The innerself is eternal; the non-eternal is the body, organs, objects, etc., From the contemplation of this kind of discrimination, there results for him, says Vācaspati, 'non-attachment to the enjoyment of fruit here and hereafter'. With this he comes to possess in abundance, of calmness, equanimity and other such, means (śamadamādi sādhanasampat). Śama is subjugation of the internal sense; dama is the capacity of the mind so subjugated for the investigation of truth; the desire to abandon objects is titiksha; turning away from objects is uparati; and faith in the truth is śraddhā.[19(c)] This arouses the desire in him, for release from empirical bondage. He who has heard that the knowledge of the eternally pure, intelligent, and free Brahman — this as the cause of release, for him there comes the desire to know that even before the desire to know religious duty, says Vācaspati. From this results not merely the desire to know but knowledge (realisation) itself.[19(d)]

7

Avidya Nivrtti

Vācaspati, like Maṇḍana, is of the categorical view that removal of nescience is not something over and above knowledge; it is the same as knowledge.[20] In the opinion of Vācaspati, the impressions of nescience however dense they may be, can be removed by prolonged meditation with diligence.[21] When śāstrajnāna ('that thou art') is continued relentlessly, it ends in the form of the experience of the self, removing all avidyā. The inner self then becomes clear, pure and bright.[22] It is then said to have realised its true nature. The same is indubitably stated by Maṇḍana.[23] With Maṇḍana, Vācaspati admits that the knowledge of the reality obtained from the śruti is not a direct realisation of it, but an indirect cognition. In short śruti imparts only indirect and mediate knowledge.

Now, it may be asked that if the mahāvākya ('that thou art') is ineffective in producing Brahmātma-ikya jñāna, even when it is heard only once, how can the repetition of the same give rise to Brahmātma-ikya-jñāna? Vācaspati replies this objection by saying that in any heard scriptural saying

(mahāvākya) the whole meaning does not come to be fully manifest; there always remains the distinction of clarity and lack of clarity of the meaning of the heard mahāvākya; by analysing the meaning of the heard mahāvākya and by constantly repeating it, the whole meaning of the mahāvākya becomes crisp, clear, direct and immediate. Herein lies the utility of repetition of the heard mahāvākya — opines Vācaspati.[24] To quote his exact words. "It is of the very nature of the repetition of the ascertainment of truth that it removes illusory cognition, though beginningless and having deeprooted and dense impressions. It is indeed of the nature of the intellect to be partial to truth."[24(a)]

Vācaspati thus admits, that the Brahmātma-ikya-jñāna arises from hearing the mahāvākyas, but does not accept the view that manana and nididhyāsana are unessential. on the otherhand, he propounds the view that it is only as a result of the perfection of Śravaṇa, Manana and nididhyāsana that the goal (Brahmātma-ikya-jnāna) could be realised.* And by nididhyāsana Vācaspati means profound meditation (jnānabhyāsa or bhāvana).[25]

Thus self realisation, in his view is a particular

* For an elaboration of this view, see Chapter VIII

psychosis of the internal organ. Since nescience is experienced as immediate it can be removed only by knowledge which is also immediate. This immediate cognition, in his opinion, requires the functioning of a sense organ (mind) or internal sense. And this mental perception can be made possible only by long continued contemplation. Thus psychosis of the internal organ is another name for the intuition of Brahman. In 'anubhava', the true nature of the jīva manifests itself when nescience is removed; with the intuition of the one supreme intelligence, nescience and its products are destroyed. This experience is of the nature of supreme bliss, which wipes out all misery,[26] which is the supreme human goal — asserts Vācaspati.

Now it cannot be argued that the internal organ being itself of the nature of nescience, cannot destory nescience and hence there cannot be liberation (moksha); for says Vācaspati, life is full of instances of entities which destroy themselves and others of the same class as themselves. To take specific instances: (1) goats milk destroys itself and other milk. (2) poison cures other poison as well as itself (3) the dust of the clearing nut (kutaja), mixed with muddy water removes both itself and the mud and makes the water

clear. Hence it cannot be argued that what-removes a thing cannot itself be the thing removed. Thus the internal organ, though of the nature of nescience, by a prolonged meditation with diligence, drives away other nesciences and that itself departs in the end. It is no wonder that one avidyā (in the form of mental psychosis or mode) removes another avidyā (in the form of adhyāsa) and it, itself disappears in the end — points out Vācaspati.[27]

Further, it cannot be argued, in the opinion of Vācaspati, that the psychosis being non-valid (as it presupposes the distinction between the knower, the known and knowledge) cannot give rise to absolutely real experience of non-duality; for even by those who maintain the absolute reality of the world, it must be said, argues Vācaspati that the conceit of the self in the body etc., is illusory, since it is sublated by valid knowledge and that it sustains the real march of the world. This mode is also the mode of the Advaitin in respect of the intuition of non-duality.[28]

8

Vācaspati elaborates the Advaitic standpoint of moksha. Moksha or Brahman-intuition, is not a product or a modification or an attainment or something purified: for

Brahman is self-illumined and self-evident. Brahman - intuition is of its own nature, eternal and hence production is not intelligible in that case.[29] Moksha is not something to be gained afresh and anew; it is ever existent. It is an ever accomplished fact. It is nothing but Brahman itself, the absolute bliss. It is realisation of what already exists.[30] It is not a new state of freedom to be won by effort. If it can be produced, it becomes temporal.[31] It would then be subject to destruction. It is self-realised. It is ātmajnāna or jñāna that is ātma. Brahman is immutably eternal and all-pervasive and hence modification, purification or attainment cannot result through contemplation.[32] How can jīva attain moksha, when it is already that? How can Brahaman be attained which is all pervasive, always and everywhere?

Thus, with the removal of adhyāsa, the prime cause of samsāra and its impressions, by right knowledge (jñāna), there arises happiness. On the removal of that superimposition the blissful nature, though eternally attained becomes attained as if not attained already. Grief misery etc., though eternally abandoned, become abandoned as if unabandoned already.[33] This means that, according to Vācaspati, attainment of release and abandonment of Transmigration, are figurative.

Thus according to Vācaspati, moksha though already attained, yet becomes, an object of desire as if unattained because of beginningless avidyā, just as one who erroneously imagines the necklace round one's neck to be non-existent, comes to realise it when pointed out by another.[34] To quote his exact words: "Under the influence of the indeterminable beginningless nescience, the nature of Brahman, though not illumined by another and though shining, appears as if not shining and as if illumined by another; though different from the body, organs etc., it appears as if not different from them. Hence prior to the extermination of the evils, nescience etc., the seeds of transmigration, it is unattained as it were and with the extermination it becomes attained as it were"[35] Thus moksha is not something fresh to be gained anew. It is everexistent. It is eternally attained.[36]

And what is generated is the bare removal of the veil of the two fold indeterminable nescience and nothing else; the nature of Brahman, being eternal, the intuition of Brahman cannot be generated[37] — asserts Vācaspati. Moksha thus is not the effect of contemplation or the effect of an unseen potentiality.[38] Further, if intuition can be

brought about by contemplation; then it is hardly free from doubt as in the case of an imagined idea and hence cannot be valid.[39] To put it in technical terms, moksha or Brahman-intuition is neither producible (utpādya), nor attainable (prāpya), nor modifiable (pariṇāmya), nor purifiable (saṁskāryya). It is nitya (eternal), eternally purified (śuddha) unembodied (ashareera), unsurpassable and being naturally established (svābhāvika).[40] It is the manifestation of Brahman through the removal of nescience which is beginningless and indefinable and the root of bondage. Nescience (avidyā) can be removed only by its opposite viz., knowledge (vidyā). It is knowledge of the real nature of jīva as atman which destroys avidyā and manifests the eternal freedom or release.[41]

Vācaspati thus describes moksha as 'avidyā nivṛttī'. This negation is of the form of Ātman as known. It is the realisation of one's own true nature. It is the realisation of the jīva that it is none other than the eternal free, self-luminous Brahman. In short it is standing in Brahmavāstha after irradicating avidyā and its impressions. However, to describe moksha as avidyā nivṛtti, does not militate against the positive ātman. Moksha, in other words, is not

a mere negative state of being free from misery, but is of the nature of positive bliss (ānanda).[42] It is not adventitous, but its own true nature. In this respect, Vācaspati distinguishes himself from Nihilistic Buddhism and the Nyāya-vaiśesika. Moksha is positive ānanda, and is realised through the destruction of avidyā that conceals it. Intuition of the truth plucks out the superimposed by the root and destroys it.[43]

And according Vācaspati, the individual self (jīva) in the state of release throws away its jīvahood and shines as Brahman in its chrístine purity. It is then said to be identical with Brahman. He takes this stand on the authority of the scriptural text, 'Brahma-veda-Brahmaiva-bhavati' (The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman).[44] Brahmāvasthā is non-dual (advaya); it alone is real and not bheda (difference). It is the convinced view of Vācaspati that it is only jnana, that can remove bondage which is the result of illusory knowledge. It is philosophic knowledge (jnāna), not karma (action) that destroys avidyā the root cause of Bheda. Bheda or difference, according to Vācaspati is relative and not absolute; Only abheda (non-difference) is real and absolute. If

bheda were also as real and as abheda, then it could never be removed by philosophical knowledge (jñāna). Jñāna, does not make a thing, which is real, vanish; it only removes false knowledge.[45] The knowledge of oneness (abheda) is superior. It sublates all experiences of duality.

However, Vācaspati asserts that the experience of Brahman cannot be adequately expressed. Brahmāvastha or the experience of moksha cannot be grasped as a theory or a view. It transcends relational thought. This is true even of ordinary immediate experiences of given objects. The distinctive attributes of various things cannot be declared, though experienced. The difference in the sweetness of sugar, milk and jaggery cannot verily be given expression to, even by the goddess of learning — says Vācaspati.[46] The deeper essence of mukti cannot be explained in words, but is to be experienced in the dynamic silence of one's own deepest meditations. Vācaspati asserts that the self is known through indubitable non-erroneous and immediate experience.

9

Vācaspati on Jīvan mukti

The question whether or not the concept of jīvan-mukti (liberation even when one is alive) is acceptable to

Vācaspati may now be discussed. It may be argued that there cannot be the so called 'jīvan-mukta', as impressions of nescience (avidyā saṁskāras), according to Vācaspati, continue to persist in him (jīvan-mukta) as he is still with a body which is due to prarabdha karma. For instance a bilious person, though cured of his bile may continue to have the impressions that sugar is bitter. So also, in the case of the so called jīvanmukta, the impressions of transmigration and consequent usages (avidyā) may continue to persist. Vācaspati rejects this contention by saying that since the enlightened one has no faith in them (the avidyā saṁskāras), he holds these empirical usages and notions to be fictitious. A person suffering from bile and consequently cured of it, has in fact, no faith in the bitterness of sugar as he has realised the truth though he spits it out and abandons it.[47] Thus the impressions of nescience may continue to persist in an enlightened person, but he has no faith in them. This means that the impressions of nescience do not really bind a jīvanmukta.

Again, Vācaspati asserts that the jīvanmukta is free from all action, as he has realised that totality of act, agent, means and fruit etc., is not real. In non-

duality there is neither the relationship of object and subject, nor agency since there is nothing to be done.[48] To quote his words: "As for that intuition which is real, there is not something to be done, since it is of the nature of Brahman."[49] He, who has no faith, is not eligible to engage in rituals and conversely rituals performed by 'ineligible' persons (viz. the jīvan-muktas) have no fruit.[50]

Now, as to the conduct of the jīvan-mukta, Vācaspati holds that only prohibitions apply to the jīvan-mukta and not prescriptions. It is so, argues Vācaspati, inasmuch as the latter require faith, conceit of agency etc., but not the former. He, who has faith in prescriptions, is eligible, not he who has no faith. In other words, though codes and conventions of ordinary morality do not bind the jīvanmukta, it cannot be said that he transgresses the moral law. Such a position does not arise at all inasmuch as he has no egoism, which may force him to transgress the moral law. He is absolutely free from egoism and will be a law unto himself. To quote his words: "For him, however, who knows the difference from everything beginning with the intellect, for him who is devoid of the conceit of the enjoyership of karma, there is no eligibility

in respect of karma. And thus, there is not (for him) acting <u>as he likes</u>, since, for him who is devoid of conceit, there is not even that.[50(a)]

However, it should be noted that Vācaspati seems to apparently contradict this sstand else where. He seems to say that the jīvanmukta is not wholly devoid of the conceit that he is human; rather does that conceit continue in him in slight traces through the continuance of the impressions of nescience.[51] This difficulty, however, is more apparent than real as he clearly pronounces that since the jīvan-mukta has no faith in ~~the~~ (impressions) he considers them ~~[illegible]~~ to be illusory.

It may be again objected that, avidyā being unreal cannot be expected to leave impressions as only a real entity can leave an impression behind. An impression of avidyā is not real and so cannot continue. Hence there cannot be embodied release (jīvanmukti).

Vācaspati refutes this contention. According to him, all effects exist as potencies in casual nescience in the state of dissolution. Knowledge has an impression; false knowledge also has an impression. Avidyā is in-explicable (anirvachaneeya) and its effects are also inexplicable.

There is nothing unreasonable in this view.[52]

It should be stated here that Vācaspati is opposed to Maṇḍana's view that at the onset of Brahman-knowledge, all karmas ('sañcita' or that which has not yet begun to come and operate, 'āgāmi' or that which is yet to come and 'prārabdha' or fructified karma) vanish like thin air.[53] In the opinion of Vācaspati, Brahman-knowledge removes all karmas except the prārabdha;[54] since it has already begun giving rise to its results it must cease of its own accord as in the case of flame and for this it does not require another knowledge; till then it continues in the form of the physical body. Prārabdha karma may be compared to a missile that has begun to take flight and it drops only after its force has been spent. This theory is called Bādhita Nivrtti.

Thus the body continues to persist even after the realisation of Brahman. It continues to exist as long as the prārabdha karma lasts. And it is the continuance of the body even after the release of the soul that makes possible the teaching of Advaita by the preceptors. If the body does not exist after release, we will be forced to disbelieve in the jīvanmuktas like Manu, Uddālaka, Hiranyagarbha etc., who are believed to have lived a life of longer duration even after

liberation, as taught by the purāṇās — asserts Vācaspati.[55]

Thus, Vācaspati along with Shankara[56] and Sureswara[57] maintains the view that the physical body of a released soul continues to exist because of prārabdha and that it will come to an end only when its inevitable workings are fully exhausted. This infact is the meaning of the Chāndogya text, 'Tāvadeva-ciram' [For him, there is delay only so long as he is not delivered (from the body) then he will become one with Brahman],[58] says Vācaspati. We may add that the vivaraṇa school gives almost the same explanation of jīvanmukti.[59]

It is to be noted that Vācaspati holds to the view of Shankara that in the case of the Jīvan-mukta there is the persistence of a part of nescience in the form of prārabdha karma. Yet it must be said that elsewhere he seems to hold to Maṇḍana's view also that in the jīvanmukta only the impressions of nescience persist, not a part of nescience.[60] In any case, whether it is the continuance of a part of nescience or impressions of nescience, Vācaspati is very emphatic in saying that since the jīvanmukta has no faith in them, he considers them to be merely illusory. Hence they cannot bind him. Thus, the continuance of body does not really come into conflict with the jīvan-mukta. They are compatible with each other.

Now it cannot be argued that Brahmavijñāna and prārabdha karma cannot co-exist in case of the jīvanmukta, as they are dead opposed to each other; for it is a fact that in the world opposites exist together,[61] says Vacaspati. Thus Brahman-realisation need not be simultaneous with disembodiment; the body continues to persist even after Brahman-realisation. But the persistence of the body does not cause any bondage to the self as he has realised the truth of non-dual Brahman. It will not lead to any further result because he has realised his true nature and hence cannot fall again in the ditch of samsāra. Being embodied, further argues Vācaspati, is not real; for if it were real, that would not cease during life; it is however caused by illusory knowledge and that can be removed even during life by the rise of true knowledge. Non-embodiment is the true nature of the released soul and it cannot be destroyed, for by destruction of its nature there would result destruction of existence.[62] Since being embodied is caused by illusory knowledge it is established argues Vācaspati, along with Shankara, that for the wise one, even when alive, there is non-embodiment. Though the body exists, it does not bind him, as he looks upon it as illusory. He quotes the upanishad: "Therefore as the

slough of a snake lies dead and cast off on the ant-hill, in the very same way lies this body; then that non-embodied immortal life is Brahman alone, light alone."[63] Here Vacaspati wholeheartedly endorses, unlike Mandana, the view of Shankara, that a sthitaprajna (a man of steady wisdom), is a siddha (perfected one) and not a sādhaka (seeker after perfection).[64] He is self realised and perfect. He is a man without distinctions of any sort; one who has reliased the non-dual nature of reality.[65] The prārabdha karma of such a person ceases to function of its own accord when the enjoyments come to be exhausted; then the body falls (deha-pāta) and the soul acquires final release (sadyo-mukti). He never returns to this saṁsāra again.

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CHAPTER - VIII

VĀCASPATI'S DISTINCTIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO ADVAITA

In an assessment of Vācaspatis contribution to Advaita, it will have to be said that in the main, his work lay in elucidating and perfecting the already available thought systems of Maṇḍana and Shankara. Perhaps his originality lay in making us see conceptual and logical lacuna with regard to topics like Avidya, its locus etc. but not in the main issues of non-dual ontology. The claim that is made of starting a new school of 'Bhāmatī' in Advaita tradition can only be true if contrasted with the one originating with Padmapāda and his close commentators in matters of detail which came to be known as Vivaraṇa at a later time. Between himself and the Padmapāda tradition (which had not yet taken its shape by that time) the difference lay in his personal achievement of the scholarship side of being more erudite and wide-based in the form of commentaries, on each of the systems of Indian philosophy, the knowledge of which he brought to bear in his exposition of Advaita. So doctrinal difference in the main thesis of non-dualism, (as contrasted with Bhartr-Prapancha and Bhartrhari) being none, either with Maṇḍana or with Shankara, his contributions lay more in the matters of detail and exposition, which may be noted below.

The most important issues on which the Bhāmatī school differs from the Vivaraṇa school are: (i) avidyā and its locus; (ii) whether avidyā is one or many; (iii) whether jīva is a reflection (pratibimba) or a delimitation (avaccheda) of Brahman; (iv) whether jīva is one or many; (v) the nature of verbal knowledge as the cause of self-realisation, i.e., whether or not śabda imparts direct and immediate knowledge; (vi) whether manas is an indriya or not; (vii) the object of akhaṇḍākāra vṛtti, i.e., whether it is conditioned or unconditioned Brahman; (viii) whether or not there is vidhi (injunction) in the upanishadic precept, 'Ātmāvāredṛṣṭavyaḥ Śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyaḥ'(Br.Upd II.iv.5); (ix) the place of karma in the scheme of Advaitic sādhana etc., These points may be elaborated.

(i) According to Vācaspati, the locus (āshraya) of avidyā, as already explained, is the individual self (jīva) and Brahman is its object (vishaya).1 In maintaining this emphatic view, Vācaspati closely follows Maṇḍana2 and parts company with Shankara who avoids asking the question.

This view on the problem of the locus of avidyā, to repeat, is opposed to the view of the Vivaraṇa School which maintains that Brahman is both the locus and object

of avidyā.[3] Both the Vivaraṇa and Sureshwara maintain that the jīva cannot be the locus of avidyā inasmuch as the former is a modification of avidyā. To say that jīva is the locus of avidyā, they point out, is to commit the fallacy of mutual dependence (anyonyāshraya dosha). That is, without avidyā, its effect viz. jīva cannot be explained and without the jīva, avidyā, the contained cannot be explained.

Thus the Vivaraṇa school does not admit of any distinction between the locus (āshraya) and the object (vishaya) of avidyā.[4]

Both Maṇḍana and Vācaspati do not agree with this view of the Vivaraṇa school. There cannot be the defect of mutual dependence, they point out, as the series (viz. the jīva and avidyā) is a beginningless series like that of the sprout and the seed. (Bījānkura nyāya). In fact Maṇḍana explains away this difficulty by pronouncing that since avidyā is indeterminable, all inconsistencies become meaningful.[5] Vācaspati here closely follows Maṇḍana and replies the objection with Maṇḍana's standard answer.

Thus Vācaspati and Maṇḍana have shown that it is the jīva that is the locus of avidyā and not Brahman, since from

the stand point of Brahman, no avidyā is possible. By no stretch of imagination could there be even a tinge of ignorance in Brahman — points out Vācaspati. He fights shy of such a position.

(ii) Further, according to Vācaspati, avidyā differs from individual to individual. It is positive and specific to each jīva. In fact there are as many avidyās as there are jīvas.[6] He thus believes in a plurality of even mūla avidyās. This is a remarkable view of Vācaspati, which is opposed to the Vivaraṇa school, which postulates only one avidyā, which is common to all the jīvas but has different modes or potencies (śaktis) to bind the jīva.

Again, as already said, if Vācaspati accepts āvaraṇa shakti (veiling power) alone as being dominant in the case of avidyā, the Vivaraṇa holds that, in the case of avidyā, both āvaraṇa and vikshepa (projecting power) shaktis are equally dominant.

Further, Vācaspati recognizes two kinds of avidyā (i) Mūla avidyā or primal Nescience (kāraṇa avidyā) and (ii) Tula avidyā or derivative Nescience (Kārya avidyā).

Both are beginningless. If the derivative avidyās, in his view, are sublatable by cognition of the object to which they refer,[6(a)] the primal nescience is removable only by the knowledge of the supreme reality.

As already said, the distinctive feature of Vācaspati's version of Advaita is that he recognises a plurality of even Mūlāvidyās. This he postulates, in order to show the distinction between the bound and the released and thus to avoid the paradox 'Eka muktau Sarva mukta Prasanga', which is the inevitable outcome of 'Eka avidyā vāda' of the Vivaraṇa school.

(iii) Again, if Avacchedavāda is Vācaspati's most advanced and pet theory, Pratibimba vāda is advocated by the Vivaraṇa school, to the exclusion of Avaccheda vāda.

(iv) If the Bhāmatī school advocates a plurality of jīvas, the Vivaraṇa School believes in a single jīva. To be precise if a Vācaspati is an 'aneka jīva-vādin', the Vivaraṇakāra is an Ekajīvavādin.

(v) Again the views of the two schools on śabda or vedic testimony differ from each other. The

questions that raise their heads here are: Is śabda or testimony (śruti) a means of knowledge? If so what is the nature of knowledge arising from śabda? If śruti is a means of knowledge, is it a direct or an indirect means? What is its place and significance?

Vācaspati's view is that śabda causes only mediate knowledge. It gives only indirect and mediate knowledge. It is to be made direct and immediate through constant practice of rational contemplation(manana) and meditation (nididhyāsana), which is the direct cause of realisation. This view is technically termed 'Prasaṁkhyāna' which is fully upheld by Maṇḍana[7] and Vācaspati. Thus according to Vācaspati, the knowledge arising out of the upanishadic texts like 'Tattvamasi' is indirect and mediate. This is a clear indication of the profound influence of Nyāya on Vācaspati. It may be briefly noted here that the Nyāya view is that Śabda can generate only an indirect cognition having a relational content. In this respect also, Vācaspati is completely one with Maṇḍana. Vācaspati is of the view that when Śastrajñāna ('Aham Brahmāsmi') is continued relentlessly it ends up in the form of the experience of self-realisation and this experience of the self removes all avidyā.[8]

The knowledge of the reality obtained from the śruti, according to Vācaspati is thus not a direct realisation of it but an indirect cognition. This has to be strengthened and intensified through incessant practice of meditation if it is to lead to Brahman realisation.[9]

Thus for the school of Maṇḍana and Vācaspati, internal organ is a sense organ. It intuits the real aided by knowledge gained through Vedic testimony (śabda), and reasoning thereon. It generates in the conditioned self, the immediate psychosis of 'I' resulting in the direct knowledge (pratyaksha) of the self.[10] Thus, according to Vācaspati, nididhyāsana is the principal organum of the knowledge of self whereas Śravaṇa and manana are secondary.

The Bhāmatī school thus holds that "the final intuition cannot be effective in destroying ignorance which is immediate unless it is itself immediate, that the immediacy can come only from the functioning of a sense organ and that this sense organ is the mind".[11] Amalānanda confirms this view.[11(a)]

This view of Vācaspati is diametrically opposed to the view of the Vivaraṇa school, according to which

Śravaṇa is the principal incentive towards the realisation of ātman and manana and nididhyāsana are subservient to it (phalopakāryange). The manana and nididhyāsana, in other words, only effect the concentration of the mind. The mind is not an instrument here for the realisation of Brahman. And Vivaraṇa would simply quote the chāndogya śruti,[12] which says that by mere instruction, immediate knowledge is effected.

Thus the Vivaraṇa school holds that knowledge through verbal testimony (śravaṇa) is of itself immediate. 'Dashamastvamasi' (thou art the tenth) is the instance oft-quoted by the Vivaraṇa School. The story runs thus: There was, once a party of ten fools who happened to cross a river. After crossing the river, they wanted to know whether their number was intact or not, to ensure that all of them were quote safe. So each one of them started enumerating. Each enumerator, leaving out himself from the counting, reckoned up the total number as nine. They were sorrow-stricken, as they thought, that they fatally missed one of their companions. Then there came an outsider and pointed to the enumerator as 'thou art the tenth'. Then there arose the full and immediate certitude of his being the tenthman and that the whole party was safe.[13] With this instance, the Vivaraṇa school points out, that verbal testimony, of itself, is the cause of immediate knowledge.

Prakāshātman, in his Vivaraṇa asserts that though the upanishadic texts imparts the immediate knowledge of Brahman, yet because of certain defects such as Vishayabbogavāsana, pramāṇa asambhāvana and Vipareeta bhāvana, it appears to be mediate. When these defects are overcome by the cultivation of virtues like control of the intellect etc., and by Vedāntic study it ceases to be mediate and shows itself to be immediate.[14]

To this view of the Vivaraṇa Vācaspati would react by saying that the intuition (thou art the tenth) results only from the sense organ as aided by that statement. The statement, 'Thou art the tenth' produces no intuition except through the mind. The cognition remains mediate because of the nature of the instrument (verbal testimony) and is not delusive. To quote him further: "This intuition (thou art that) does not, verily, result from verbal testimony.................... but from the internal organ perfected by the contemplation of the meaning of sentences of indubitable import, ... Nor is this experience itself of the nature of Brahman, in which case it could not be generated; rather, it is a

particular psychosis (vṛtti) of the internal organ itself, having Brahman for its content.[15]

Thus[17] for Vācaspati meditation becomes the primary means for moksha, for the Vivaraṇa, śabda alone is the means to moksha.

It appears sensible that Vācaspati should have advocated Prasaṁkhyāna, inasmuch as knowledge of the scriptural sentence, (why, for that matter, any sentence) presupposes the knowledge of the individual words, composing it. In this sense, it may be said that repetition is necessary to get the meaning of the whole sentence.

That śabda causes only mediate knowledge is against the views of Shankara.[16] and Sureshwara. Shankara criticises, in accordance with the śruti, that also contemplation and meditation on the meaning of śruits leads to the realisation.[17] Sureshwara maintains that direct Brahman realisation arises only from hearing the great texts of the śruti and not from meditation.[18] Thus Shankara and Sureshwara hold that the shabda causes direct knowledge and that the knowledge obtained from hearing the śruti is immediate. This view which is opposed to the Nyāya view is fully adopted and endorsed by the Vivaraṇa School.

However whether śabda is paroksha or aparoksha, there is no difference of opinion among the two schools regarding its importance as the only means leading to spiritual knowledge.[19]

(vi) For the Bhāmatī school manas, as already said, is a sense organ (indriya) and it is a precept of sākshin.[20] The knowledge of happiness, misery etc., are valid since they are generated by the manas which is a sense organ. In general, according to Vācaspati, all sense generated knowledge is valid. Vācaspati's argument is that, manas is the instrument for internal perception and therefore it is a sense organ. When it transcends the finest, it enjoys the state of transcendental reality. Vācaspati, as already noted rejects the view that the Upanishadic texts can directly produce intuitive insight. On the other hand, he emphasises the need for contemplation or nididhyāsana. Manas, for him, is a sense organ and Brahman-jñāna arises through manas. But on this account, it should not be interpreted that Brahma-jñāna is mental knowledge, as Brahman according to Vācaspati is not the content of the mind that is impure. Brahman, on the other hand, is the content of the vṛtti

that removes the obscuration of nesciences. Thus according to Vācaspati, pure manas (vṛtti that removes the obscurations of nescience) originates Brahman-knowledge. It is the instrument in giving rise to the knowledge of the identity of atman and Brahman.

But Padmapāda points to the possibility of one's being aware of oneself without the instrumentation of mind. In the view of Vivaraṇa, immediate cognition may result even from the verbal testimony, without the functioning of a sense organ, internal or external and that the mind is not a sense organ.[21] Padmapāda argues that consciousness itself is in the nature of illumination, it does not need mind to illuminate even as one lamp does not need another lamp to show it. Thus for the Vivaraṇa, manas is not a sense organ.

Bhārati-Tīrtha-Vidyāraṇaya is his Panchadashi, tries to synthesise the two opposed views of the Bhāmati and the Vivaraṇa. He characterises manas as an internal self.[22]

According to Shankara, scripture[23] does not hold mind to be a sense organ. But the smṛti[24] mentions mind

separately from the senseorgans. On this ground, Vācaspati may be taken to have interpreted Shankara as favouring the view that manas is a sense organ.

(vii) Again, the Bhāmati and the Vivaraṇa Schools differ, as to what is said to be the intuition of pure Brahman and what is said to be intuition of conditioned Brahman. According to Vācaspati, what is veiled by nescince is the conditioned Brahman, inasmuch as the unconditioned is flawless; it cannot be veiled: nor can it be revealed. What is revealed by final intuition must therefore, concludes Vācaspati, be conditioned Brahman.[24(a)]

But according to the Vivaraṇa school, pure Brahman unenveloped by any upādhi (adjunct), is an object of manovṛtti.[25] That is, the non-delimited Brahman is the object of akhandākāra vṛtti.

Vācaspati does not accept this. According to him, pure Brahman cannot be the object of any knowledge. It is self effulgent. The conditioned Brahman (upahita) alone is the object of realisation. In his explicit words: "Indeed, that which is free from all adjuncts is declared to be self-effulgence, not that which is conditioned too...

Nor, is there freedom from all adjuncts in the intuition of Brahman, though a psychosis of the internal organ, for, the intution, is known to be an adjunct, opposed both to itself and to other adjuncts, being itself on the brink of destruction."[26] Amalānanda, in his Kalpataru makes this view very clear.[27]

(viii) Again, there is a difference between the Bhāmatī and the Vivaraṇa schools, with regard to the discussion whether or not there is vidhi (injunction) in the Upanishadic precept: 'Atmāvāre dṛstavah śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyah' (the self is to be seen to be heard, to be reflected and contemplated thereon),[28] and the nature of vidhi etc.

According to the Vivaraṇa school, self-realisation, the ultimate aim of life is possible only through the injunction, 'Ātmā vāre dṛstavyah ....' It is at the root of studying and understanding the Vedānta. Prakāshātman emphasises upon the realisation of the self only through this injunction. Thus the origin of Vedāntic studies, is in the injunction of Śravaṇa. Prakāshātman clearly establishes, in his Vivaraṇa, that in 'Ātmā vāre ....' there is the stamp of a distinct vidhi. And, on the vidhi, the Vivaraṇa school concludes that Śravaṇa is the principal one and manana and nididhyāsana are auxilary.[29]

But Vācaspati is of the view that Śravana, manana and nididhyāsana are not the objects of any injunction, but are only objects of factual statement, (Vihitānuvādaka). These belong to the realm of pure knowledge (jñāna), which is completely devoid of any injunctive force. Vācaspati goes on to say that knowledge arises as soon as the conditions of it are fulfilled; and for this no clamp of vidhi is necessary. Thus these three steps only indirectly show us the path of self-realisation and they are not vidhis. This becomes further clear and is confirmed by the author of the Prakatārtha, who strongly objects, in vile language, to Vācaspati's alleged slavish adoption of Maṇḍana's views.[30]

Now, to examine briefly, the nature of vidhi, its varieties and its implications. Vidhi or injunction, according to the Mīmāmsakas, is that which ordins every individual to do a particular act, which is otherwise not required to be carried out, as in the case of what ought to be done (duty). Thus that alone is an injunction, which induces activity where there was none before.[31] The distinctive feature of vidhi is such that the knowledge it gives, cannot be obtained by any other known means of knowledge, other than itself, ("Aprāpta prāpako vidhih").

There are three kinds of vidhis: (1) Apūrva (original injunction), (2) Niyama (Restrictive injunction), and parisaṅkhyā (exclusive injunction).

To take up the first one. Apūrva vidhi enjoins an individual to do a particular act for the realisation of a specific purpose which is otherwise impossible by any of the known means of knowledge. For instance, 'one who desires heaven, should perform Agnihotra sacrifice' (Agnihotram juhuyāt svarga-kāmah) is an apūrva vidhi, as it enjoins an individual, desirous of a specific aim (svarga or heaven), to perform a specific sacrifice (Agnihotra). The relation between the cause (performance of Agnihotra) and the effect (attainment of heaven) is made known only by śruti and all other known means of knowledge are incapable of pointing to it — says the Mīmāṃsaka. That is, here Śruti becomes, the only means and there can be no alternative means which may suggest this. Thus apūrva vidhi, is that which tells us something utterly unknown (atyanta-maprāptārtha). It has the purpose of making known what was unknown.[32]

Niyama vidhi or restrictive injunction on the other hand, is that vidhi, which enjoins only one means

to get a desired result, out of several alternative means. That is, according to this vidhi, only one means is enjoined at the cost of other means. For instance, 'one should thresh the rice grains' (vrīhīnavahanti). 'Here to get the result of the separation of husks from rice, in order to prepare sacrificial cakes, pounding (avaghāta) of paddy is enjoined'. Of course there are various alternative methods which aim at the separation of husks from rice like spotting by nails etc., But here we should note that only 'avaghāta' is enjoined by the vidhi. Also it has a positive significance, either for empirical knowledge or scriputral instructions. Here the alternatives are mutually exclusive and incompatible. Thus of the positive alternatives niyama vidhi restricts some particular alternative only.

The parisankhyā or an exclusive injunction is that injunction, which discards one of the two alternatives to both of which something specific may be taken to refer simultaneously.[33] For instance 'one should eat the flesh of only five five-nailed animals' (pancha panchanakhā bhakṣyāh). Here the precept enjoins the eating of the flesh of only five five-nailed animals like the hare. This vidhi, entirely discards, by implication, the eating of the flesh of others animals like the monkey. Thus parisankhyā vidhi is that which

eliminates one of the alternatives which are already known (prāptārtha).

In a nutshell, if Apūrva vidhi tells something utterly known, the Niyama and Parisankhyā vidhis aim at the elimination of one of the alternatives which are already known. Again, the Niyama vidhi is distinct from parisankhyā vidhi in that it has got a positive significance, either for empirical knowledge or scriptural instructions whereas parisankhyā vidhi has only a privative significance in the sense that its only purpose is to reject outright the other kinds.[34]

The Vivaraṇa School admits that the vidhi in the vedic precept ' Ātmāvāré dṛstavyah .....etc.' is restrictive or niyama, inasmuch as the alternative means to self-realisation are restricted by the only means viz Śravaṇa. In otherwords, Śravaṇa is advocated at the cost of other means. Thus the Vivaraṇa school is of the firm opinion that vidhi is plausible in the matter of self-realisation. It is never tired of saying that only because it is a vidhi that the aspirant determines to move in the path of self-perfection.

But, according to Vācaspati, in 'Ātmā vāre dṛstavyah.. ....etc.' there is no vidhi. As for the above texts, Vācaspati says that they are what have the appearance of injunctions,

not real injunctions.[35] To quote his exact words: "The text 'contemplate as the self' is not an injunction; just as for example, texts like 'Vishṇu is to be sacrificed to with the upāmshu' are what have the appearance of injunctions; this is the sense intended."[36] We get an indirect knowledge of Brahman from the Vedāntic texts and the realisation of it in practice requires training of the mind through meditation.[37] Hence for Vācaspati, meditation becomes a primary means to moksha.

The view that there is vidhi in the vedic precept 'Ātmā vāre śrotavyo ....etc.' in connection with the knowledge of Brahman, can be criticised thus: The upanishads speak of Brahman or Ātman as the independent principle of Vedāntic knowledge. To say that there is vidhi in 'Ātma vāre dṛstavyah....... etc.' is thus to admit only the secondary importance of Brahman thereby making it dependent on the injunctive precept. Thus Brahman becomes secondary in significance, while the vidhi itself becomes primary. Hence Vācaspati rejects such a view. In maintaining that there is no vidhi in 'Ātmā vāre dṛstavyah..... etc.' Vācaspati has the solid support of Shankara who has refuted[38] the presence of only vidhi in the context of Brahma-jnāna.

Thus Vācaspati is of the view that the jīva's realisation of its true nature is alone the cause of the cessation of the attribute of transmigration and not that contemplation, reflection etc., have the purport of injunction. Thus Vācaspati concludes, that even of reflection and contemplation, there is no prescription, since of these two, which are established by copresence and coabsence to have the fruit of injunction, there is but restatement (anuvāda) by sentences which have the appearance of injunctions.[39] Thus according to Vācaspati, it is the copsesence and coabsence of reflection and contemplation, that establishes the subsidiariness to the intuition of Brahman and it is not an injunction.

However, it must be pointed out that Vācaspati, in his commentary on some adhikaraṇas, seems to accept injunction in respect of Vedāntic study etc., For instance while commenting on the section known as 'Vākyānvayadhikaraṇa',[40] Vācaspati says: 'ātmaiva drastavyah sākshatkāratavyah etam sādhanā ca śravaṇādeeni vihitāni śrotavyah ityadinā'. see also 'sahakāryāntara vidhiyādhikaraṇa'[41] where he says: Apūrvatvāt vidhirāsthayah'.

Thus, it seems that Vācaspati admits of injunctions as regards Vedāntic study etc., which is clearly a contradiction.

However, Amalānanda, his commentator, comes to the rescue of Vācaspati. Amalānanda proceeds to reconcile this apparent contradictory position by pointing out that the statements which appear to have the sense of injunction are merely restatements of what is a matter of ordinary experience. In his view they just help the aspirant to have strong attraction towards Vedāntic study etc.,

(ix) Again, the Bhāmatī and the Vivaraṇa schools advocate different views as to the place of karma in the scheme of Advaitic sādhana. If the former maintains the view that karma is conducive to the desire to know Brahman (vividisha) the latter is of the view that karma is conducive not to the desire to know Brahman but to know Brahman itself (vidyotpāda)*

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* See Chapter VII

CHAPTER - IX

SUMMARY OF RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

Vācaspati Mishra was really one of the greatest thinkers of the Post-Shankara Advaita thought. In the entire history of post-Shankara Advaita Vedānta, his Bhāmatī has been the first complete commentary on the Brahmasutra-Shānkara-Bhāshya. In it he has made the fullest possible use of logic that is in accordance with Śruti. He has succeeded in a wonderful manner in setting at nought the fantastic egotism of the reasoning which does not have the sanction of Śruti. His has been a fine piece of dialectic in establishing the self-luminosity of knowledge. He has shown much zeal in refuting the Buddhist and the Nyāya contention that the validity of knowledge depends on extreneous conditions. His definition of pramā is so comprehensive, that it reduces all the different theories regarding the validity of knowledge, to the theory of non-contradictoriness. Further, it is only in Bhāmatī, and not in Panchapādika, that Shankara's brief statement on various therories of error, gets expounded in a greater detail. The technique of Vācaspati's criticism of other theories of error is to be specially noted here. According to him, criticism consists in drawing out the implications of the view of the opponent, on the basis of the principles accepted by himself

(the opponent), and then pointing to the self-contradictory character of that view, through sharp logical scrutiny. Here Vacaspati asserts that by his illogical assumptions, the opponent's position gets itself reduced to an absurdity. Vācaspati thus repudiates the views of the opponents and establishes his own Advaitic stand point. This technique is particularly illustrated in its logical perfection by Vācaspati, in his refutation of other theories of error. Thus the credit of critically elaborating other theories of error such as asat khyāti, ātma khyāti, akhyāti, anyathā khyāti and their dismissal in favour of anirvacaneeya khyāti, goes to him.

Vācaspati's claim, concerning the nature of jīva, is only a common sense admission of human limitations and a philosophical clarification of them. In his view, the I-notion is spurious, born of ignorance whereas the pure self (ātman) in its absolute nature, transcends that notion. The jīva is nothing by but the apparent limitation of Brahman by avidyā. Jīvabhāva though beginningless (anādi), is not eternal. It is capable of throwing away its false adjuncts through the knowledge of the true nature of itself. With regard to the plurality of jīvas, he proposes a simpleminded logical method of commonsense. He regards empirical logic as a sophisticated

extension of commonsense. His view that jīva is the locus of avidyā and that there are as many avidyās as there are jīvas, one for each jīva, is simplistic, straightforward and immensely satisfactory, though not free from difficulties. If the plurality of avidyās is postulated by him to show the distinction between, the released and the bound, his solution, as already noted, ends with a problem. It ends up in the defect of reciprocal dependence between jīva and avidyā. Vācaspati seems to solve this problem by bringing in the 'Bījānkura nyāya' or the beginningless process of the dependence of seed and sprout. Whenever Vācaspati is faced and charged with the fallacy of reciprocal dependence, he repeatedly resorts to 'Bījānkura nyāya'. It is his sweeping epithet. It has its philosophic source in Maṇḍana. This is rather a weak answer to escape from the difficulty. He does not seem to have taken into his mind Gauḍapāda's brilliant dialectic, throwing it overboard, after showing the utter unintelligibility of the doctrine.[1]

Further regarding Vācaspati's 'Anekajīvāshrita Aneka Avidyāvāda' a tentative statement can be made that it l logically ends up in Dṛṣṭisṛṣṭi-vāda or the radical solipsism of the type of Prakāshānanda, with the admission of which Advaita

Vedānta gets into the 'coma'. This, however, is not True in the case of Vācaspati, as according to him, though jīva is the locus avidyā, it is never the controller, as control is not in its hands. Themselves being the 'jīvas', they cannot create a world full of jīvas. Therefore the world must be considered to be created by God, who is the controller of all avidyās.[2] Thus there should exist the omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent Iśvara. Nothing can be farther away from the truth than to say that in Vācaspati's system, there is no room for Iśvara. This interpretation has the support of Brahmānanda. Vācaspati's blistering attack on the Buddhist Vijñānavāda and its total rejection, goes against Drṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda. So keeping in view of Vācaspati's insistence on the relative existence of God and the external world, his 'Anekajīvāshrita Aneka Avidyā vāda' should be carefully understood as not implying the radical solipsism (Drṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda) of the type of Prakāshānanda. Iśvara, jīva, jagat etc. are all real as long as avidyā is not removed through right knowledge. Iśwara, in his view, is at best, the highest of the appearances of Brahman, the ultimate reality, which is essentially attributeless (nirguṇa) devoid of all distinctions whatsoever, non-transformable (apariṇāmi), acosmic, (Nishprapancha), the only

ontological reality of all phenomenal appearances. However from the empirical stand point, Brahman in conjunction with avidyā, ie., Iśwara, is both the efficient and the material cause of the world. World, says Vācaspati, is a conditional reality. It is inexplicable (anirvacaneeya), as it is neither existence ('sat') nor non-existence ('asat') nor both existence and non-existence (sadasat) -- this being a contradiction in terms -- but different from both existence and non-existence (sadasadvilakshana), something unique. He has successfully established the indeterminable nature (anirvachaneeyatva) of the world. He aptly puts it that the Advaitins concern is not so much with the establishment of the identity between Brahman and the world appearance; rather it is with the out-right re-pudiation of all diversity whatsover as being in-explicable (anirvacaneeya). The whole thing boils down to this. Vācaspati neither underestimates the value of saguna Brahman or Iśwara in the plane of relativity nor does he compromise Nirguna Brahman.

Moksha or self-realisation — the supreme human goal — in the view of Vācaspati, is a final psychosis of the internal organ in the form of continued meditation on the true nature of Reality, heard from śruti, which is of the nature

of supreme bliss. It wipes out all, misery. His postulation of 'anekaavidyā vāda' despite its shortcomings, satisfactorily explains the distinction between the released and the bound. It has a relative advantage over Ekaavidyā vāda. If according to the latter view there exists only one avidyā common to all the jīvas, then no jīva can be said to be completely free until all the jīvas become free. Thus moksha itself, on this view becomes a remote eventuality. He is a strong advocate of jīvanmukti. He has carved out for karma a distinctive place in the scheme of sādhana, by regarding it as very essential to arouse the desire to know Brahman (vividisha). This seems to be rather a weak stand. On the face of it, it looks untenable for the desire to know is not verily determined in the absence of what is to be desired. His contention has more a scriptural sanction than empirical validation.

In giving an estimate of Vācaspati, it should be stated here that he is completely one with Shankara in his unsparing criticism and outright dismissal of (i) sphota vāda[3] and (ii) Jnānakarma samuccheya-vāda which are strongly upheld by Mandana. Similarly (iii) in vehemently defending and committing himself to a whole hearted acceptance of jīvanmukti,[4] Vācaspati fully subscribes to Shankara's

position. However, Vācaspati seems to be in perfect sympathy with Maṇḍana, in explicitly maintaining that (i) Jīva is the locus of avidyā; (ii) in advocating 'Bījankuranyāya', the theory of the beginningless dependence of the seed and the sprout, in the case of the problem of the relation between jīva and avidyā; (iii) in maintaining that śabda gives only indirect and mediate knowledge of Brahman; (iv) in holding that mind is an indriya (sense organ) and (v) in totally embracing the doctrine of Prasaṁkhyāna or continued meditation. He tries his best to attribute Prasaṁkhyāna to Shankara through a strained interpretation by twisting and tilting some words in the Shānkara bhāshya. For instance, while commenting on the sūtra 'Linga ca', Vācaspati moves heaven and earth, to make Shankara subscribe to Prasaṁkhyāna,[5] which is severely criticised by both Shankara and Sureshvara.[6] It is astonishing that Vācaspati should have explained the above text in the Maṇḍana way. It is here that Vācaspati parts company with Shankara and plays into the hands of Maṇḍana. It should however be noted that Vācaspati's defense of the irrepressible self-luminosity of the self, goes against his contention that śabda causes only indirect and mediate knowledge.

Vācaspati knows full well that he is much indebted to Maṇḍana, who along with Shankara built up the solid structure of Advaita, for (i) his critique of difference (Bheda), which he simply borrows and adopts in his Bhāmatī; his refutation of Difference-cum-non-difference (Bhedābheda) though an independent argument, nevertheless owes its spirit to Maṇḍana; and for (ii) providing a readymade answer, as it were, to any possible objection against the doctrine of avidyā, by resorting to the indeterminable nature (anirvacaneeyatva) of avidyā. However in emphatically advocating Avaccheda vāda, it should be said, that Vācaspati differs from Maṇḍana who advocates, in quite explicit terms, Pratibimba vāda in his Brahmasiddhi.[7] Passing to the points of affinity, in broader terms, ~~between~~ among the three great thinkers, it should be said that, Vācaspati is in equal agreement with both Shankara and Maṇḍana in: (i) sharing the problem of resolving the conflict and contradiction between śruti and reason in favour of the former; (ii) in holding that bondage is because of beginningless indeterminable nescience (anādi anirvācya avidyā); and; (iii) in maintaining the view that the removal of nescience (avidyānivṛtti) is itself moksha[8] or ātmajnāna, or to put it more precisely, jñāna that is ātma.

Vācaspati thus presents a rare combination of the sound and subtle philosophical thought of both Shankara and Maṇḍana. In giving a rational as distinct from scriptural foundation for Advaita, Vācaspati finds nothing so useful as Maṇḍana Prasthāna. Thus the credit of connecting the special features of Maṇḍana prasthāna to Shankara prasthāna goes to Vācaspati Mishra. Now-a-days, it is rare to find vedāntins, who follow Maṇḍana prasthāna directly, but there is no lack of Vedāntins who follow Maṇḍana Prasthāna in the name of Vācaspati. He seems to invite and accept certain modifications, as already noted, introduced into Advaita doctrines during or after Shankara. With all his reverence for Shankara, Vācaspati does not hesitate to appropriate Maṇḍana's thought. He seems to hold that the defence and exposition of Shankara gain substantially in some crucial points thtough a supplementation of his thought with Maṇḍana's arguments. In this he is followed by all the subsequent thinkers of Advaita. In this sense it may be said, that Vācaspati does joint justice to both Shankara and Maṇḍana. Thus the credit of reaffirming, explaining elaborating and consolidating the doctrine of non-dualism goes to Vācaspati. His contribution to Advaita Vedānta has consolidated itself as a 'Prasthāna', which is not a small tribute to any thinker.

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3. 'Yan Nyāya kaṇikā tattva samīksha tattvabinduhi yam nyāya sāṁkhya yogānām vedāntānām nibandhane'

4. S.N. Das Gupta, HIP, Vol. II pp. 46

5. Buddhistic logic, Vol. I (Dover publications, New York, 1962), pp. 50

6. S.N. Das Gupta, HIP Vol. II pp. 107

7. See Kalpataru II. iv. 17

8. See also Ābhoga Ed. S.Subramanya Sastri, pp. 32 introduction

9. Bhā. Introductory verse No.7

10. See S.K.R. Rao's article in Tattvāloka, (Madras, Aug. 1978), Vol. I. No.3

11. D.N.Sastri, Op.cit. Critique of Realism, pp. 87

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13. 'Vācaspatimati vimbitam ādarsham prarambhe vimalam'

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15. See Foot Note No. 10

16. See S. Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, p.9

17.

(a) 'Vasv-ānka-vasu vatsare' as quoted by S.N. Das Gupta Op.cit. p. 107

(b) First page of the appendix to the Nyāya Vārtika as given in the edition of the Nyāya vārtika in the Bibliotheca Indica, 1907, quoted in the Yoga system of Patanjali by J.H. Woods, Introduction p. xxiii

18.

(a) "Tasmin maheepe Mahaneeya keertau shriman Nrgekari mayaa nibandhah" - the last verse of Bhāmatī

(b) See also the Bhāmatī II. 1. 33

19.

(a) Bhāmatī, p. 446, Niranaya Sagar edition, Bombay.

(b) This would also appear to be evident from the repeated reference to mustard oil in the Bhāmatī

(c) Dr. Umesha Mishra actually mentions the village and a tank which is named after Vācaspati. He gives other reasons too, for holding that Vācaspati was a native of Mithila. See his History of Ind. Philosophy, Vol. II. p. 100

(d) See also, Bhā. Ca. Su. (Theosophy publishing House, Madras, 1933), 1933 P. x, Intro.

20.

(a) A.B. Keith, Indian Logic and Atomism, p. 30

(b) Dr. Umesha Mishra, Op.cit. P. 47, 104

(c) S.N. Dasgupta, Op.cit. p. 107

(d)

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(c) The naturalistic tradition of Indian Thought, Dale Riepe (1964), p. 230.

(d) M. Hiriyanna, Outlines of Ind. Philosophy, p. 227 and p. 269.

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(f) Satish chandra Vidyabhushan M M, A History of Indian Logic,(Motilal Banarsidas, 1971) p. 133.

22.

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(b) Umesha Mishra, Op.cit. p. 104

(c) "Vācaspati living in the 9th century quotes him (Dharmottara) several times" in Nyāya vārtika Tātparya Tīka, pp. 109, 139, quoted in Prof. Stcherbatsky, Buddhistic Logic, Vol. 1 (Dover Publications, New York, 1962), pp 41, 50.

23. Op.cit p. 107

24. The Yoga System of Patanjali (Harward Oriental Series, Vol. 17) introduction. See. also J.V. Bhatta-Charya' Nyāya Manjari of Jayanta Bhatta, 1978 p. xxx Introduction.

25. See Sanskrit introduction to his edition of Sankhya-tattva-kaumudi.

See p. 300

26. Op.cit. Introduction

27. Umesha Mishra also holds this view Op.cit. pp. 97
103

28. Ibid p. 97 and 100

29. *Bhāmati*, Nirnaya sagar edition

29. (a) See Foot notes No. 18(a) and (b)

30(a) Sriman Nrgekari mayānibandhah" last verse of *Bhāmatī*

(b) *Bhāmatī* (Ninranaya sagar edition) P. 481 and 1020.

(c) *Bhāmatī* II. 1.33.

31. 'Prajnaana timira śamanoo paradamano Nyāyamanjaree ruciraap' See. C.D. Bijalvan: *Indian Theory of Knowledge* based upon Jayanta's Nyāya manjari (Heritage Publishers, N. Delhi, 1977) introduction.

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(b) Trilochana gurunnitamaa ....

Nyāya vārtika tâtparya tīka, 1-1-4
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3. Ibid. P. 78

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6. Ibid. p. 9

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8. Ibid. p. 36

8. (a) S.C. Chatterji, Op.cit. p. 203.

9. Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 36

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7. Bhā. I.i.1. p. 80.

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24. Kalpataru I.i.2. p. 95.

25. Tai.Upd. II.i.1.

26. (a) Bhā. II.i.14.

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27. 'anirvāchya avidyā dviteeya sachivasya prabhavato
Vivarta yasyaite viyadanila tejoobavanayah
Yatasehābhūdviśvam caramacaram uchā vāchamidam'.

28. Nihśvasitamasya vedāh veekshita metasya panchabhūtāni
Smitamasya charācharamasya ca suptam mahā pralayah.

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36. Bhā. I.i.6.

37. Bhā. I.i.4.

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bhoga shakti na tasya chaitanyam. Tasmāt chidātma
eva kārya kārana samghatena grahthime labdha kriyā
bhoga saktih'. Ibid. p. 41

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5. Ch.Upd. 6-3-2-

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7. Se IBID. p.40.
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13. Bhā.Ca.Su. p.79 'Jīva evatu tat upādhirahitah śuddha Buddhātyādi svabhāvo'
14. Ibid. p. 212 'Iti jīva paramātmano pāramārthikamaikyam tathāpi tasyopahitam rupam jīvah'
15. Ibid. p. 196 'Anādi anirvacaneeya avidyapādāna meva Bhramano jīva iti ca kshetrajna cā cakshate'
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22. Ibid. p. 38
23. Ibid. pp.39-40
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25. Ibid. p.41. 'Naca adhyāsesathi vishyatvam, Vishayatve ca adhyāsah iti anyonyāshrayatva iti samppratam beejānkuravadanādittvat purva purva adhyāsa tat adhyāsa na vishayee kṛtasya Uttarottara adhyāsa vishayatvam avirodhāt'

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28. Bhā. II.iii.18

29. Bhā.Ca.Su. P.50

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42. Ibid.

43. Bhā. pp. 555-556 Anantakrishna Sastri's edition.

44. Ibid. p.477

45. Ibid.pp.687-691

46. Ibid. p. 643

47. Ibid. p.409 See also Br.R.Siddhi pp. 22,140

48. Bhā.II.iii.31.

49. Bhā. III.ii.9. Siddhānta

50. Bha.II.iii.31

51. Bhā. p 708, Anantakrishna Sastri's Edition.

52. Ibid, p. 335

53. Bhā. II.iii.17; II.iii.28; II.iii.30.

54. 'Antahkaranādi avacchinna pratyagātmā chetanah kartā, bhoktā jīvatma'_Bhā. I.i.1.

55. Bhā. I.iii.7; II.i.14; II.i.26;

55. (a) Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 6.

56. Bhā. I.i.4.

57. pp. p. 108, 111 and Vivarana p. 287, 294 (Madras Govt. Oriental series, Vol. LV, 1958).
'Sarvajnātman also favours Bimba-pratibimba vāda!

58. SLS. pp. 166-7.

59. N.S. II,61

60. Bhā.Ca.Su. p.6. See also SLS. pp.171-175

60. (a) SLS. S.S.S. Sastriès translation p.40. Intro.

61. Vedānta Paribhāsa p. 381 Venkateshwara Press, Bombay) 1968.

62. Gaudapādakārika, III.3-8 and Shankara's commentary thereon.

63. J.N. Sinha, Problems of Post-Shankara Advaita Vedānta (Sinha Publishing House)Pvt. Ltd., Calcutta, 1971) p.24.

64. K.H. Potter, 'The Presuppositions of India's Philosophies'
See also A Critique on the Vivarana School,
B.K. Sen Gupta p. 255

65. Bhā.I.i.4, I.iv.22, II.ii.18., II.ii.28, II.iii.43,
II.iii.44, See also Kalpataru, II.i.33.

65. (a) II.ii.1 to 10

65. (b) I.Iv. 19. to 22

66. This interpretation is supported by Appaya Dīkshita
in his Parimala I.i.4.
see also, S.L.S. p. 35, Introduction

66. (a) B.K.Sen Gupta Op.cit. p. 255.

67. Bhā.I.iv.22, II.ii.28, II.iii.43.

67.(a) Bhā. I.ii.18.— Antaryāmi adhikaraṇa p. 254
'Yo jīvo niyanta loke siddhah sa paramatmaiva
upādhi avaccheda kalpita bhedastatha vyā khyā
yata itya sakṛdā veditam'-

68. 'Nanu-jīvā api Brahmatattvā vyatirekādvi-śuddha svabhāvah,
tat katham teṣu avidyāvakāśah? Vārtametat na ca, tāvad-
bimbādavadātāt Pratibimbam Kṛpāṇādiṣu bhinnam; atha ca
tatra śyāmatādiraśuddhiravakāśam labhate'— (Br.Siddhi, BK.
Swamy Madras edn) Part I p. 11.

See also 'Paramārthena abhinnā api Brahmaṇo jīvah kal-
panayā mithyabuddhyā bimbapratibimbacandravacca
tato bhidyante; evanca bhedamātramatra Kalpanikam'
— Śankhapāṇi tīka on Br.Siddhi, p.11 (Madras edn)
Part II p. 32.

69. See Foot notes No. 55 (a)

69.(a) Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 38 Intro. See also Parimala I.i.4.

70. Ibid. p. 117 'Tat Iśwarād bhito Jīvātma paramākashādiva
Ghatākāshādaya'.

71. Bhā. III.ii.3, II.i.4, II.iii.11.

72. Umesha Mishra, Op.cit. Vol. II p. 115

73. Bhā.II.iii.40, III.ii.10. See also Shānkara Bhāshya on III.ii.10.

74. 'Ajnana vishayikrtam caitanya Iśvarah; Ajnāna āshrayee bhūta ca jīvah. Iti Vācaspati mishrāh. Asmin pakshe Ajnāna nanātvat jīva nānātvam. Prati jīvanca p[r]apancha bhedah; — Siddhānta Bindu, pp. 227-28 Chowkamba edition.

See also S.L.S. pp. 165-166.

75. Bhā. II.iii.40.

76. S.L.S. p.160

77. For a discussion of various forms of Eka-jīva-vāda see Advaita Siddhi p. 539.

78.

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CHAPTER - VI

1. A.K. Roy Chaudhury, Self and Falsity in Advaita Vedanta (1955). p. 120.

2. Ibid. p.120.

3. Bhā. II.i.14.

4. Kalpataru (Nirnaya Sagar Press, 1917) p. 455.

5. Bhā. II.i.14.

6. Adhyāsa Bhāshya

7. HIP, S.N. Das Gupta, Vool. II, p.108

8. Bhā. (N.S. Press) 1917,pp. 95, 162, 168, and [illegible]

9. Br.Siddhi. p. 123.
9. (a) Bhā. II.i.8; II.i.14.
10. Bhā. II.i.14

11. Bhā. II.i.4. and II.i.12.

12. Bhā. II.i.18.

13. Bhā. II.i.26

14. Bhā. I.i.4. See also Kalpataru I.i.4.

14. (a) Bhā. II.i.26

15. Bhā. II.i.22.

15. (a) Bhā. II.i.34.

16. 'Avidyā sahita Brahmopādānam Jagat' Bhā. II.i.37.
See also. Bha. II.i.33.

17. Bhā. I.i.2. 'Rajju ajñāna sahita rajjupādāna ....
evam avidyāsahita Brahmopādānam jagat
brahmanyeva asti tatraiva ca leeyate iti'

18. Bhā. I.iii.30, p. 333. See also the opening verse of
Bha. 'Anirvāchya avidyā dviteeya sachivasya
prabhavato'.

19. 'Brahmaipekshit anādyanirvāchyāvidyā sachivam jagat
upādānam' — Bhā. I.i.5.

20. S.L.S. p. 158

21. HIP. Vol. II p. 106

22. Bhā. II.i.10.

23. Bhā. II.i.29.

24. Bhā. I.i.2.

25. Bhā II.i.24.

26. Bhā. I.i.5. See also Bha. II.i.14 and II.ii.28

27. Bha. III.ii. 1 to 6 Sandhyādhikaraṇa.

28. Preceptors of Advaita, Ed. T.M.P. Mahadevan
'Aghatita ghatana patīyasi māyā'

29. Bhā. P. 428, N.S. Ananthakrishna Sastri's Ed. (N.S. Press)
1917

30. Bhā. II.i.14.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

33. Bhā.Cu.Su. P.23. The same is well brought out by Madhusudana Saraswati in his 'Advaita Sdddhi', p. 489, Nirnaya sagar Edition.

34. Sv. Upd. IV, 10. 'Māyinām tu Maheshwaram'.

35. Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 44.

36. 'Anṛtena hi pratyūdah' — Ch. Upd viii.3.1.

37. 'Nā-sadāsin-no-sadāsit tadānim tama āseet tamasā gudha-magre praketam' — Yajurveda II, 8-9.

38. 'Indro māyābhih puru rupa iyate' Rg veda VI, xvii,18.

39. Bhā. II.iii.31.

40. See 'Devatādhikarana' in Vedānta kalpataru.

41. Kalpataru I.iii.3. and also Parimala I.iii.3.

42. Kalpataru, I.i.1.

43. Br.siddhi, pp. 22, 140; Bhā. II.iii.31. and III.ii.9.

44. See Vivarana, Vizianagaram edition, p.57

45. HIP. Vol.1 p.109

46. Panchapadika, pp.26 and 29 Mos CLV. Ed. P. Rama Sastri.

47. V.A. Sharma Citsukha's contribution to Advaita (Kavyalaya Publishers, Mysore, 1974) p. 71.

48. Iṣta Siddhi 1-9.

49. V.A.Sharma, Op.cit. p. 71.

50. See Pancapādika Vivarana, pp.74, 85 MOS. CLV Ed. P. Rama Sastri.

51. Bhā.Ca.Su. pp. 59, 76, 77, 127

52. Bhā.I.iii.30. I.iii.33.

53. Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 15

54. Bhā. III.ii.29.

55. See Foot Note.33.

56. Bhā. p. 378 Anantha krishna Sastri's edition

57. HIP Vol. II, p. 104.

58. Panchadashi I.16-17.

59. 'Jivādhikaraṇāpi avidyā' — Bha. I.iv.3. Appaya Dīkshita says: 'Jīva eva ajnānashrayah na brahma ityatra Pramāṇam'. — I.iv.3.

60. 'Na avidyayā Brahmāshrayah kim tu jīveshātu anirvacaneeya ityuktam tena nitya shuddha brahmā' — Bha.I.i.4.

61. Bhā. I.ii.1 to 8

62. Bhā. I.iv.1. to 7

63. Bhā.I.iv. 19 to 22
63. (a) See Br.Siddhi pp. 10, 12 and 14.
64. Vivaraṇa, Ist varṇaka, pp. 210, 219 see also Nai.si. pp. 105 - 106, M. Hiriyanna's edition.

65. Panchapādika vivaraṇa p. 74, 85, 89, 99, MOS. CLV Ed. P. Rama Sastri, see also B.K. Sen Gupta, A Critique on the Vivarana School, p. 249.

66. HIP, Vol. II p. 113.

67. Bhā. II.iii.36.

68. Bhā. I.ii.10th and 11th adhikaranas

69. Nai.si. III p. 107

70. Bhā.pp. 235, 421, Ananthakrishna Sastri's edition See also Br.Siddhi pp. 10, 11

71. Bhā.Ca.su. P XXXIV, Introduction

72. Sanjukta Gupta, 'Studies in the Philosophy of Madhusudana Saraswathi, p. 21. See also 'A.D. Sastri 'Post-Shankara Dialectics' pp 289-290

73. 'Tad-eva-avidyānām avidyātvam' See also Bhā.Ca.Su. p. XXXIV. Introduction.

74. 'nahi māyāyām kascidanupapattih; anupādyamānārthaiva hi māyā' Br.Siddhi p. 10.

75. Kalpataru, p. 258 Ananthakrishna Sastri's edition.

76. See V.S.M, Jīvananda (1897, Calcutta) p. 11

77. See Foot Note No. 72

78. See Vacaspati on Advaita Vedānta, S.S. Hasurkar, (Darbhanga) p. 216

79. See 'Ajnāna' G.R. Malkani (Luzac & Co., London, 1933) p. 21.

80. K.B. Ramakrishna Rao, Ontology of Advaita, Introduction pp. 22-23

81. Brahma-sūtra-Shānkara Bhāshya IV.iii.20.

82. 'Na vayam pradhānavad avidya sarva jiveshwara ekam. Acaksha maheena eva upalabhye mahi, kim tu eyam prati jīvam bhidyate' — Bhā. I.iv. 1.

83. Bhā. I.iv.3. Amalānanda says: that in the interpretation of this sutra Vācaspati differs from Shankara who advocates only one avidyā.

83 (a) Bhā. II.iii.40. Amalānanda points to the difficulty of such a view. If avidya is one only residing in Brahman, with the destruction of that single avidya, there would be release from all. On the Other hand if it is not destroyed there is always the danger by the liberated souls returning to samsāra. Hence there should exist as many avidyās as jīvas, one for each jīva. 'Avidyādaham xpetya, sarvamukter — apādanāt aparihāratvam' kalpataru.

83. (b) Bhinnadhi karanayah vidya avidyayoh avirodhat' Bha.

84. Bhā. p. 378 Anantakrishna Sastri's edition. Vācaspati interprets the term (avyakta) as indeterminable, either as real or unreal.
'Iyam eva asya avyaktvam yad anirvacaneeyatvam nāma' Bhā.

85. Bhā. p. 377, Ananthakrishna Sastri's edition.

86. P.P.V. (Pancha Padika Vivarana)pp. 74, 85, 89, 99, MOS CLV Ed. P. Rama sastri. see also S.L.S. pp. 169-170.

87. See Anandagiri's commentary on I.iv.3. See also Vedānta Paribhāsa p. 172 English Translation S.S.S. Sastri. (The Adyar Library, 1942).

88. Bhā. II.iii.40. See also S.L.S. Introduction p. 40.

89. S.L.S. pp. 315 318 See also Bha. Ca.Su. p. XXXiv, Intro.

90. Bhā. p. 297 Bakre's Edtion

90. (a) 'Anaditvāt bijānkuravad ubhaya siddeh' — Bhā.

91. Bhāskara Bhashya p. 219.

92. Bhā. p. 261 line 8 to 10. Bakre's edition.

93. Bhā.Ca.Su. p. XXXii Intro.

94. V.S.M. (Vidyabhushana and Nityabodha, Calcutta), pp. [illegible]-30

95. Siddhānta Bindu, Advaita manjari edition pp. 112-118, quoted in by S.S.S. Sastri S.L.S. Eng. Transl. pp. 44-45 Intro.

96. 'Drstimātrātmakam jagat' — VSM (Vidyabhushana and Nitya bodha, calcutta) p.91.

97. See Indian Idealism, S.N. Das Gupta p. 172
See also S.L.S. Eng. Transl. pp. 298-299

98. SLS Eng. Translation p. 298, 299 Mandukya Kartha [illegible]
[illegible].

99. Mandukya Karika 5,6,7, Chapter.I

100. V.S.M. Ed. Col. Arthur Venis, p. 16.

101. HIP Vol.I. p. 477

102. S.L.S. Eng. Translation p. 301.

103. Ibid. p. 301

104. V.S.M. Tika, Jivananda p. 30-38

105. HIP. Vol. I pp. 477-78

106. S.L.S. Eng. Translation p. 301.

107. Bhā.Ca.Su. P. XXXi intro.

108. S.L.S. English Translation p. 302

109. (i) See Brahmānanda's commentary on Siddhānta Bindu p. 117 quoted in S.S.S. Sastri,English translation p. 44 Intro.
(ii) Bhā.Ca.Su. XXXVii, Intro.
(iii) 'Māyinām tu Maheshwaram' — SVET. Upd. IV.10.

110. S. Radhakrishnan, The Brahma Sutras, English Translation (Ullen and UnwinP. 143.

111. 'Jīvādhikaraṇa api avidyā nimittatayā vishayataya vā ishvaram āshrayate iti ishvarāsrayā iti ucyate na tu adhāratanya' Bhā. p. 378, Ananthakrishna Sastri's Edn. see Also Bhā. I.i.2. II.i.22, 28, 33. See also S.L.S. p. 180 Engl. Translation.

112. S.L.S. Eng. Translation pp. 157-158

113. Bhā. II.ii.28 p. 549-550 and 551, Ananthakrishna Sastris edition.

114. S.L.S. English Translation p. 180 See also Bha.Ca.Su. p. XXXv introduction

115. (a) This is exactly Amalānanda's interpretation, See Kalpataru, I. iv.3.

115. See Siddhanta Bindu pp. 112-118 Advaita Manjari Edition, quoted in S.L.S. English translation p. 44.

116. S.L.S. Eng. Translation p. 42 Intro.

117. 'Māyīnām tu Maheswaram' — Sv.Upd. IX, 10.

118. Verse No.4.

119. See the invocatory verse No.5.

120. Bhā.Ca.Su. p. XXXii Introduction.

120.(a) Chapter II p. 6 - 7

121. Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 139

122. Ibid. p. 140;

123. Ibid. p. 140

124. Ibid. p. 142

125. Bhā. I.i.3. See also III.ii. 11 and 12

126. Bhā. I.i.3.

126. (a) Bha. II.iii.40

127. Ibid.

128. Bhā. II.i.34. See also II.iii.41.

129. Bhā. I.i.2.

130. Bhā. II.i.37

131. Bhā. II.ii.37 - 41

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CHAPTER - VII

1. Br.Siddhi pp. 36-37, 134, 135, 154.See also Bha.Ca.Su. p. 83. seem again Sarvapekshadhikarana (III.iv.26 and III.iv.27)
'Utpattau jñānasya karmā apeksha vidyate vividishot pādadvāra, vividishanti yajnena iti śruteh'

2. See III.ii.34. See also S.L.S. Eng. Translation p.332.

3. Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 85.

4. Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa XI, 11, 6, 13; Mundaka III.1.8.

5. Br.Upd. IV.iv.22.

6. Bhā.Ca.Su. pp. 83-84 see also Bha. IV.i.12th adhikarana

7. S.L.S. English Translation p. 332.

8. Vivarana pp. 37, 43, 554 (Govt. Oriental manuscripts Lib. Edn. 1958)

9. Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 107

10. Brahma-sūtra-Shānkarabhāshya III.iv.26. see also Br. Siddi. Ed. S.Kuppusvamy Sastrigal, p. XXXv, intro.

11. Br.Siddshi, pp. 12,13,35. see also introduction p. XXXiii

12. Br.Upd. IV.iv.22.

13. Br.Siddhi. p. XXXiv. Intro.

14. Brahma-sūtra-III.iv.26.

15. Bha. pp.51, 58, Ananthakrishna Sastri's edition; see also Br. Siddhi Br.Siddhi. p. XIvii, Intro.

16. Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 85. See also Bhā. III.iv.8.

17. Brahma-sūtra-Shānkara-Bhāshya I.1.4.
'Anustheya karma phala vilakshanam mokshakhyam'
See also III.iv.26 'Evam āshrama karmāṇi vidyā Vidya phala siddhau na apekshayanta utpattau ca apekshayanti'.
See again III.iv.3. See further Shankara's Bhashya on Br.Upd. p. 412-413, 657-658, 684 to 696.

18. Nai.si. I-46 to 51 and Brihadaranyaka vārtika part I Verses 321 to 325; Part III verses 79 to 82.

19. Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 79.

19.(A) Ibid. p. 96

19 (b) Ibid, p. 96

19. (c) Ibid. pp. 96-97

19. (d) Ibid. p. 97

20. Br. Siddhi p. 32 'Vidyadaya eva avidyānivṛttih'.
See. also pp. 121-122 'Vidyai va ca avidyanivṛttih'.
See Bha. Iv.i.l. and IV.i.2. The cessation of avidya is itself the rise of true knowledge.

21. Bhā.Ca.Su. pp. 91, 156.

22. Ibid. p. 73.

23. Br.Siddhi. p. 35

24. Bhā.Iv.i. 1st adhikarana.

24. (a) Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 46

25. Ibid. p. 46

26. Ibid. p. 129

27. Ibid. p. 80. This explanation has its roots in Mandana's Interpretation of Iśāvasya text: 'Vidyām ca avidyām' See also p. 246.

28. Ibid. p. 244

29. Ibid. p. 75

30. Bhā. IV i.9th Adhikaraṇa

31. Bhā. IV.iv.22

32. Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 76

33. Ibid. p. 156

34. Ibid. p. 63

35. Ibid. p. 108

36. Bhā. IV.i.9th Adhikaraṇa

37. Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 76

38. Ibid. p. 183.

39. Ibid. p. 76

40. Ibid. p. 169

41. Ibid.p.183

42. Ibid. p. 103

43. Ibid. p. 153

44. Mundaka upd. III.1.3.

45. Bhā. II.i.14. see also III.ii.29.

46. Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 140.

47. Ibid. p. 81

48. Ibid. p. 242

49. Ibid. 9. 244

50. Ibid. pp. 81-82

50. (a) Bhā. II.iii.48, p. 626 Ananthakrishna Sastri's edition

51. Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 82

52. Bhā. Iv.i.5.

53. R.Balasubramanian, Advaitha Vedanta, p. 262. However it must be correctly stated here that in Mandana both the views i.e., body falling off immediately on the onset of Brahman knowledge, and the body persisting for same time even after Brahman-realisation as a result of trace of nescience, (avidyā saṁskāra), are there. Both according to him, are sound and tenable. However he prefers the second but not to the exclusion of the first. See. Br.Siddhi. p. 132 Part I See also introduction p. XXXviii

54. Shankara bhashya on the Brahma sutras & Bhā III.iii.32. IV.i.15, IV.i.19

55. Bhā IV.i.15 56. See F-Note No 54

57. Nai.si. pp. 196 to 202; Br.Vartika,Part II, pp. 738-741

58. VI.xiv.2

59. P.P.V.(V.S.S., 1892) p. 294

60. Bha.Ca.Su. p. 82

61. Bha.IV.i.15,Siddhanta
62. Bha.Ca.Su. p. 283
63. Br. Upd. Iv.iv. 7.
64. Kalpataru IV.i.15.
65. Bha.IV.i.15, Siddhanta.

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CHAPTER - VIII

1. See. Chapter VI
2. Br.Siddhi. pp. 10, 12, and 14.
3. Vivarana, Ist Varnaka, pp. 210,219.
4. B.K. Sengupta, A Critique on the Vivarana School, p. 249
5. Br.Siddhi, p. 19.
6. Bhā. I.iv.1. see also I.iv.3.
6. (a) Bha.Ca.Su. p. 77
7. 'Paroksha rupam Śabda Jñānam' Br.Siddhi, p. 34. See also 'Sākshātkarana phalam he tadanuchintanam drstārtham' p. 154.
8. Bhā.Ca.Su. pp. 46, 79
9. Bhā.I.i.1. na Chai sa Sākshātkārah Śabdasya pramāṇasya phalam'
10. S.L.S. English Translation, Chapter III,4.2 Also see 'Yathā gāndharva śāstrartha jñānā bhyāsa sahita samskārasacivah śrotrindriyena shadjādi svara grāma murcanabhedam adhyaksamanubhavati, evam vedāntārtha jñānabhyāsahito samskāro jivah svasya Brahma bhāvam antaḥkaraṇeti'. — Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 79 See also Bhā. II.ii.10. and IV i.1.

11. S.L.S. English Translation, Introduction p. 88; see also Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 77.

11. (a) Kalpataru p. 218 Ananthakrishna sastri's edition.

12. Cha.Upd. Vl. XVi.3

13. Nai.si III verses 64-71 and Br.vārtika, verses 206-216.

14. Vivarana (Govt. Oriental Manuscripts Librrary Edn.) pp. 403-408.

15. Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 78

16. 'Pratyaksham śrutih' — Brahma-sūtra-Shānkara — Bhashya I.iii.28.

16, See also III.ii.24 'Pratyakshānumānābhyam śruti Smrtibhyam'

17. Brahma-sūtra-Shānkara-Bhāshya 1.1.2. 'Vākyartha vicāranādhyavāsānanivrtta hi brahmavagatih' See also I.1.4. 'Avagatā yarthaivat manana nididhyāsanayoh'.

18. Nai.siddhi I-67, III verses 88 to 93, III-verses 123-126 see also Bri. Vārtika Part I verses 818 to 849; Part III verses 796 - 961.

19. See Brahma-sūtra-shānkara-Bhāshya I.1.3. 'Śāstrad eva pramānad ....brahma adhigamyate' - See also Br.Siddhi. p. 135 'na catma rupasya Sabdad anyatah siddhi'.

20. Bhā. II.iv.17.

21. Vedānta Paribhāsha. S.S.S. Sastri, English Translation. (The Adyar Library, Adyar, 1942). p. XViii, Intro.

22. T.M.P. Mahadevan, Philosophy of Advaita, (I Edn.) p. 30.

23. Brahma-sūtra-Shānkara-Bhāsya- II.iv.17.

24. B.Gita, XV-7

24. (a) Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 78

25. Vivaraṇa Op.Cit. pp. 211,213,224.

26. Bhā.Ca.Su. P. 78

27. Kalpataru: Vanmādhyādhikaraṇa', I.i.2. 'Vṛtti Vishayatvam mapi-tu/saiva upahitasya na nirupadhe tanna prasmaratavyam'.

28. Br.Upd. II.iv.5.

29. B.K. Sengupta. Op.cit. P.3.

30. S.L.S., English Translation, p. 4, introduction.

31. Bhā.Ca.Su. p. 147

32. Ibid. p. 147

33. R.Balasubramanian, Op.cit. p.266

34. B.K.Sengupta, Op.cit. p. 5-6

35. Bhā.Ca.Su. pp. 94.172, 239

36. Ibid. p. 172.

37. Bhā.I.i.1. 'Na chaita.........sabdasya pramanasya phalam'

38. Brahma-sūtra-Shānkara-Bhāshya I.i.4. 'Kimarthānitarhi vidhicchāyāsp arshini vākyāni?'

39. Bhā.Ca.Su. p.239.

40. Bhā. I.iv.6. p. 328 N.S. Edition.

41. Bhā. III.i.14. p. 828, N.S. edition. See also 'Sarvāpekshadhikaraṇa' (III.iv.26 and III.iv.27

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CHAPTER - IX

1. Gauda pāda kārika 4-80.

2. See Foot Note No. 111, Chapter VI.

3. Sphotavāda, is the doctrine of the grammarians. The doctrine holds that the word is of the nature of 'Sphota', which is supersensuous. It arises in the mind after the word is uttered. It is distinct from and overabove the letters. According to this theory it is sphota and not letters which manifest the meanings of the word. Sphota is the eternal sound without parts. It is the cause of the world and is identical with Brahman. See Brahma-sūtra-Shānkara-Bhāshya I.iii.28. Mandana has fully susbscribed to it.

Both Shankara and Vācaspati severely criticise it. Like Shankara, Vācaspati holds that the letters themselves constitute the word. The letters of a word though many, when succeeded in some fixed order, give all the meaning they have. See Bha. I.iii.28.

With regard to the relation between words and the meaning of sentence, there are two theories: 'Anvitābhidāna vāda' advocated by the Prābhākara school of Mimāmsa and 'Abhihitānvaya vāda' advocated by the Bhātta school and adopted by Vācaspati.

According to Anvitābhidāna vāda, the words in a sentence convey both their individual meaning and the import of a sentence. That is to say, words only in association with other congruent words bring out the import of a sentence.

As against this, the Abhihitānvaya vāda holds that the words, in a sentence signify their own sense only. The import of a sentence, according to this theory is but the result of the coherence of the meanings of words. That is, it is merely a synthesis (anvaya) of the meanings of the separate words composing it. See. D.Venkataramaiah, Pancapadika of Padmapada, English Translation (Gayakwad Oriental series, 1948). p. 22

4. Mandana's stand regarding 'Jivanmukti' must however be correctly stated. No doubt he is inclined to accept it, but not to the exclusion of 'sadyo-

mukti', which alone, according to him, is complete and total liberation. In his view, the so called 'sthita prajna' (man of steady wisdom) is only a highly matured 'sādhaka' but not a 'siddha' (see Br.Siddhi. p. 13). Shankara and Vācaspati stands for a total rejection of this view. (See Foot note. No. 53, Chapter. VII).

5. See Bha.pp. 922-935, Ananthakrishna sastri's edition.

6. See Foot Note No. 17. Chapter VIII.

7. See Foot Note No. 68. Chapter V

8. See Foot Note No.20 Chapter VII. See also Brahma-sūtra-Shānkara Bhāshya I.1.4. See further Shānkara-bhāshya on Br.Upd. IV.iv.6. 'Avidyā-nivrttimātre moksha vyavahārah'.

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